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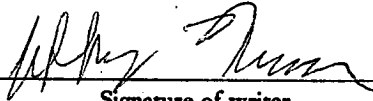
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Revolutionary Millenarianism in the Modern World:  
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From Christian Identity to Gush Emunim

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REVOLUTIONARY MILLENARIANISM IN THE MODERN WORLD:  
FROM CHRISTIAN IDENTITY TO GUSH EMUNIM

VOLUME ONE

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO  
THE FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF THE HUMANITIES  
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BY

JEFFREY KAPLAN

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION TO REVOLUTIONARY MILLENARIANISM IN THE MODERN WORLD: FROM CHRISTIAN IDENTITY TO GUSH EMUNIM

In April, 1988 a Ft. Smith, Arkansas jury returned a not guilty finding in a criminal action unprecedented since the Second World War: a sedition trial involving 13 far right leaders, all of whom either headed or were closely identified with the theology which has come to be called Identity Christianity. The indictment was brought in the wake of the 1982 suppression of the revolutionary activism of the group that the press came to call the Order, but who called themselves the *Bruders Schweigen* or Silent Brotherhood. The *Bruders Schweigen* had in the early 1980s delivered to the U.S. Congress an official declaration of war, demanding that three states in the American Northwest be set aside as a White homeland. All of the *Bruders Schweigen* were either followers of, or sympathetic to, the tenets of Identity Christianity.<sup>1</sup> It was this same social critique of American society fashioned in Identity circles over the past seven decades motivating the *Bruders Schweigen* which, publicly shorn of the radical theological basis of these observations, formed the heart of the campaign for the governorship of Louisiana by David Duke in November of 1991: a campaign in which Duke captured the majority of the white voters of that state.

On May 20, 1990, an attempt by Gershom Scholem's Temple Mount Faithful to lay the cornerstone for the putative Third Temple, an effort that was prevented in any case by the Israeli police, sparked a stone-throwing riot on the Haram al-Sharif, the site from which the prophet Mohammad is believed to have ascended to heaven on his famous Night Journey. When the shooting stopped, 15 Palestinians lay dead.

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<sup>1</sup> Telephone conversation with the betrayer of the *Bruders Schweigen*, Tom Martinez, October 24, 1991. Martinez is now in the federal Witness Protection program.

On a rainy September weekend in St. Louis, Missouri in 1991, a group of prominent evangelical and fundamentalist Protestant supporters of the Jewish effort to rebuild the Third Temple met to plan strategy for the coming months.<sup>2</sup> Individuals spanning the political spectrum were invited, ranging from the most militant advocates of taking decisive action NOW, men such as Terry Risenhoover and Douglas Krieger, to the most solidly respectable pillars of their respective communities, men such as Ed McAteer of the Religious Roundtable.

These disparate events, by themselves of rather trivial importance, are in fact linked in a number of fundamental ways, and in aggregate, suggest a trend which is neither trivial, nor in fact, unprecedented. For what is at the root of each action is a deep disaffection with the processes of contemporary history, and a desperate longing to effect an escape from a perceived reality which each of these sets of actors finds unbearable. This critique of contemporary society places such seemingly disparate actors as Identity Christians, fundamentalist and evangelical Protestants, and 'fundamentalist' and messianic Jews, comfortably within the framework of the model of historical millenarian activism.

Secondary linkages, include the fervent embrace of an 'imagined history' complete with a perceived lost 'Golden Age' based on a strongly manichaeian and conspiratorial view of history, as well as a certainty of being victims of a 'theft of culture' and membership in a 'community of seekers' which, while largely invisible to the dominant culture, embraces an array of beliefs and ideas ranging from neo-paganism to 'satanism' to extremist secular political groupings (with multiple or serial membership common among adherents). It is in fact from this large pool of disaffected seekers that each movement on which this dissertation focuses finds new recruits or peripheral supporters. Each movement has as well attracted an organized and vociferous opposition, and a definite mirror imaging effect is discernable, with every movement seeming to increasingly and consciously conform to

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<sup>2</sup> Series of telephone conversations with Terry Risenhoover, July-August, 1991.

the image shaped for it by its opposition. This process has in fact become so pronounced that there is a clear symbiosis between the movement and its antithesis, with the millenarian adherents being confirmed through the machinations of 'the other' in their own conspiratorial fantasies, while the movement's enemies have increasingly found it to their advantage to magnify the millenarians' scope and appeal far beyond the bounds of reality for reasons ranging from fund raising to, in the last analysis, a justification for the very existence of the 'watchdog' group itself.

It is the position of this dissertation that, through the sort of history of culture approach associated with the work of Johan Huizinga<sup>3</sup> that an examination of the constellation of millenarian/messianic activists emerging from both the Jewish and Christian communities will illuminate a millenarian subculture which, while few in numbers, is portentous for the future of the dominant culture. It will do this by examining at some length the interactions of the millenarian community with the dominant culture, and to attempt to analyze the perceptions, indeed the demonization to which each group subjects the other. A primary focus of this examination will center on the on the practical effects which these 'carefully created' public images of the respective communities have on contemporary social and political discourse within the dominant culture. The primary objective of the examination then, is to shed some light on the considerable impact on the dominant culture of small, seemingly fringe religious movements. Consideration too will be given to the factors which catalyze from the traditionally quietist millenarian community a revolutionary form of millennialism which seeks in essence to bring to a close the process of history, allowing the 'righteous remnant' to enter an era of utopian meta-history.

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<sup>3</sup> This approach is best exemplified by the work of Johan Huizinga. J. Huizinga, "Historical Conceptualization," in Fritz Stern ed., *The Varieties of History* (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), pp. 290-303. Cf. J. Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages* (New York: Anchor, 1924, 1949).

## The Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation seeks to present a portrait of what could be referred to as a 'millennial community': a community of seekers representing a diverse group of often bitterly oppositional belief systems bound together primarily by their unbending oppositional stance toward the social, political and religious order of their respective societies. This opposition is invariably expressed in a religious idiom, and centers on a set of clearly defined and widely shared tenets. The primary linking factor is that each movement holds an apocalyptic view of history. History in this context is envisioned as in a state of inexorable and irredeemable degeneration from a 'Golden Age' time of bliss to an apocalyptic denouement, following which the tiny 'righteous remnant' of the elect will emerge into a chiliastic paradise of peace, plenty, and not least, power. Until this chiliastic climax to history however, each movement examined in these pages must 'occupy'; that is, live within the confines of history and at the sometimes grudging sufferance of their respective societies.

In order to accomplish this act of survival, each movement in this dissertation has sought to, on the one hand, reawaken within themselves the spirit, if not the substance, of the lost 'Golden Age' prototype of a divinely ordered form of individual behavior and social organization. At the same time, each group seeks by various means to spread its message to the dominant culture. However, finding access to the mainstream society either blocked completely or subject to the filter of a mass media seen as controlled by a malign and envious 'other', these groups have been forced to turn inward--concentrating on reinforcing the beliefs of the already 'awakened', or more commonly, on speaking to the adherents of other oppositional belief systems. It is this remarkable web of interactions between adherents of often diametrically opposed belief systems which is at the heart of this dissertation.

The dissertation is organized as a series of case studies, with one belief system invariably leading in a sort of natural progression to the next. This examination was based almost entirely on primary sources: interviews with leading theoreticians of each movement as well as relevant movement documents. Secondary sources dealing with these religious movements are of wildly variable quality. Most, in fact, are exercises in academic polemics, or, more commonly, simply non-existent.

The first case to be examined is Christian Identity. The successor to nineteenth century Anglo-Israelism, modern Identity Christianity is a strongly anti-Semitic and racist theology centering on a highly unstable form of apocalyptic millenarianism. Identity is examined in the context of the full spectrum of the racist right wing in America (which in the process is thoroughly redefined), and from the perspective of a single center of Identity belief: the Church of Israel of Schell City, Missouri, pastored by Dan Gayman.

The selection by Identity theorists of the newly emergent Noahide movement (B'nai Noah) as a sign of the End of Days forms a backdrop to the next case study. Here, the interaction of the bitterly anti-Semitic Identity theorists with the equally strongly philo-Semitic B'nai Noah is examined to illustrate the central motif of this dissertation: the concept of a millennial community. In the process, this dissertation provides the first academic examination of the emergence of the B'nai Noah, as well as a study of the hermeneutical process by which signs of the End are identified, interpreted, presented to the adherents, and either accepted or rejected by the 'laity'.

The next study centers on a too-often overlooked element of the millenarian community: the adherents of occult or magical belief systems. Here, borrowing the concept of mapping from Martin Marty, the linking role of the Odinist/Ásatrú community is noted. Ásatrúers/Odinists seek to reawaken the pantheon of the pre-Christian Germanic and Norse peoples. These groups were found to provide the primary linkage between racist millenarians--primarily Christian Identity and various permutations of neo-Nazi beliefs--and in Colin Campbell's terminology, the 'cultic milieu'. This chapter on

Ásatrú/Odinism is, again, the first such scholarly examination to be made of this religious community.

The Israeli settlement movement, Gush Emunim, is the focus of the next case study. The centrality of Israel, and particularly Jerusalem, to the millenarian groups in this dissertation made an examination of the Israeli religious context of prime importance. The chapter on Gush Emunim therefore, looks at the movement in considerable depth, both in terms of its historical development, and as a vehicle to explore the concepts of religious fundamentalism and millenarianism/messianism. Here too, community is a key, as linkages between the Gush and such related movements as those seeking to rebuild the Third Temple, and through the Temple movement's connection to the B'nai Noah, linkages with the American millenarian community exist as well.

The final case study centers on perhaps the most important--yet invariably overlooked--sector of the 'millennial community': the organized 'watchdog' groups in the United States and in Israel. Borrowing the term 'Anti-Cult Movement' from its current application in the sociological literature, this chapter seeks to redefine the subject by offering a taxonomy of various anti-cult or watchdog appeals which include, in addition to groups which exist to monitor cult movements, such political entities as the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai Brith, Klanwatch, the Southern Poverty Law Center, and many more. The purpose of this research was to provide a model by which the various sectors of the millennial community may be cut off from access to the dominant culture and by which 'ACM' groups are able to find their own niches in the crowded universe of American interest groups. Finally, the ability of the 'ACM' groups to shape a culture's perception of reality is tested through an examination of the popular construction of 'multi-generational Satanism'.



## Dissertation Methodology and Narrative Style

### I. Review of the Primary Literature

This dissertation is built on the foundation of primary source documents and oral interviews. Primary source material for early Anglo-Israelism begins with the writings of Richard Brothers (available in the Rosenberger Collection), of Wilson and of Allen, and finally of Poole and the American and Canadian successors to Anglo-Israel theology. The conversion of the faith from its early vague philo-Semitism to a powerful anti-Semitic theology then opened the literature of modern anti-semitism to investigation, with primary emphasis here on the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, *The Talmud Unmasked*, and the writings of Henry Ford's *Dearborn Independent*, gathered in a four volume set together known as *The International Jew*. This literature provided the bridge into other primary source documents, which include the writings and cassette recordings of such right wing and Identity leaders of the 1920s and 1930s as Gerald L. K. Smith, Gerald Winrod, and Howard Rand, to name but a few, to the modern leaders of Christian Identity and its related theologies, such as the revived "Cathari Dualism" of the late Michigan Klan leader Robert Miles. Modern Identity figures have been considered from their writings, their recordings, and in a number of cases, from personal contacts through letters, telephone and personal interviews, and the like.

### II. Review of the Secondary Literature

The first step in approaching any field is obviously a thorough review of the secondary literature. As there exists no reliable secondary literature dealing with the movements under consideration in this dissertation, this was been accomplished, with a thorough examination of historical cases of millenarianism which placed special emphasis

on outbreaks of millenarian revolutionary fervor. This reading centered in particular on four key structural elements of the historical model: leadership, social composition, ideology and socio-political context. This historical dimension spanned the literature dealing with the 15th century Taborites through 17th-18th century movements in England and France. Some attention was given to the anthropological literature dealing with non-western cases of revolutionary millenarianism, but it was found that a fundamental difference exists dividing actors seeking to escape a process of history which was being irretrievably altered by the sudden appearance of a little understood outside force (Western colonialism) and those whose disaffection is from the process of modernization viewed by others in the society as both internal and natural, and is thus accepted without question.

The secondary literature dealing with the specific groups in question was read next. Anglo-Israel secondary literature was almost entirely polemical, with adherents and opponents dueling over hermeneutical approaches to scriptural passages. At issue here are views as to the existence and accessibility of an esoteric as well as an exoteric message of scripture. This debate, despite being brought to the floor of the British parliament by a follower of Richard Brothers, does not seem to have made a significant impact outside of theological circles.

Secondary literature dealing directly with Identity Christianity from a scholarly point of view is sparse. Only one recent book by James Aho offers a reasoned and dispassionate view of the movement, albeit from the limited perspective of the state of Idaho and the discipline of sociology. Brief articles by Michael Barkun on the millenarian aspects of white supremacist movements which centered largely on Identity completes the recent catalogue. What is left falls into two main categories: journalistic forays of varying utility to the scholar, and the polemical writings of the movements enemies. As will be demonstrated on the basis of documentation obtained from the United States Government under the Freedom of Information Act, this material is highly suspect in terms of factuality,

but is valuable nonetheless for its insight into the shaping of the public image of the movement--an image which adherents all too often adopt as a personal style.

Secondary literature dealing with Gush Emunim and the Temple Mount movement is no less problematic. Background here in historical terms tends to come from the excellent body of literature which has grown up around the field of Jewish messianism, with the work of Abba Hillel Silver, Raphael Patai and especially, that of Gershom Scholem of greatest value to this dissertation. From the towering quality of this body of work, it is then of some disappointment that academic writings dealing with the current Settlement Movement typified by Gush Emunim and the closely related Temple Movement, is of, at best, uneven quality. Polemics are at the root of this problem, and this polemical approach to the subject becomes most pronounced in the voluminous journalistic coverage of the subject.

The secondary source problem is even more dire in the area of the American Protestant activism on behalf of the Temple. Virtually no scholarly sources exist. Academics writing on the subject, few and far between, are a study in polemics. Journalism is even more one-sided, leaving activists loathe to trust anyone, journalist or academic, who approaches them for information.

### III. Review of the 'Contextual' Literature

The primary sources detailed above from both Identity and Temple Mount circles opened a third, and from the perspective of the history of culture, vital area of investigation. This involves the materials, both primary and secondary, dealing with groups and individuals on which the main protagonists of this dissertation lavish inordinate time and attention. These are the 'community of seekers', seen often in quite negative terms, but who nonetheless constitute a central focus of the movements' attention. The explanation for this concentration becomes obvious only when considered in light of the

nearly complete inability, for a number of quite different reasons, of either the millenarian or messianic activists to carry their message directly to the dominant culture. Thus an assortment of the disaffected; mystics, neo and retro pagans, wiccans, 'satanists', and many more become a prime concern of each of the movements. They constitute, in the last analysis, a primary 'proof' of the imminence of the Last Days (Mat. 24:24), and ironically, a primary recruiting pool for both sets of adherents.

Secondary literature in this area is vast. Special attention was given to historical contexts in that the adherents of both groups profess a strong belief in the continued activity of such groups as the 18th century Illuminati and the Masonic groups. Secondary works on contemporary witchcraft, satanism and neo-paganism were heavily consulted as well, as were a number of experts around the country from backgrounds as divergent as law enforcement, academia, and the religious anti-cult movements.

Primary source material came again from the writings and recordings of adherents, as well as from personal interviews, observation of rituals, and conversations with both leaders and adherents of a bewildering variety of groups and ideas, united only by a rejection of the direction of the dominant culture and, indeed, of the contemporary world, by a desire to escape from the processes of history, and by the hermeneutical enterprise of reconstructing, almost as an escape vehicle from the society whose tenets the various adherents so strongly reject, a long dead (or dormant) tradition from the lost ashes of a previous 'golden age'. The emphasis in this research is less to record the rather bewildering variety of groups and ideas active in this ethos, than to document the interconnections of this 'ocean of seekers' with the two constellations of actors central to this dissertation.

#### IV. Narrative Style

This dissertation seeks to allow, to the greatest degree possible, the subjects to speak directly to the reader in their own voices. It is, in this view, the scholar's primary duty to lend an analytical voice to the proceedings, as well as to provide the conceptual framework needed to make sense of so many disparate views. Yet even a cursory examination of the literature, much less the popular press, provides graphic evidence for the demonization of religious communities which are the focus of this dissertation. To the greatest extent possible then, this dissertation will allow the activists to speak directly to the questions suggested by this examination. This approach, I believe, will allow for the stripping away of the demonology surrounding each set of adherents, and allow for a reasoned consideration of the actual impact of the movements on the dominant culture.

## CHAPTER 2

### IDENTITY CHRISTIANITY TODAY: A THEOLOGY OF VIOLENCE?

*Rebellion is a sin of sorcery,  
presumption a crime of idolatry! [1 Samuel 15:23]*

*As a private citizen, you have a responsibility to protest sin and put down evil by working in cooperation with the proper authorities in the home, church and state. You do not have the Scriptural authority to...wield the sword of vengeance.*<sup>1</sup> [Pastor Dan Gayman, 1991]

*One of the first signs of a civilization in decay is the toleration of evil. Then the moral desensitizing process engulfs society and evil is no longer perceived as evil. Evil becomes simply an alternative lifestyle.*<sup>2</sup> [Donald S. McAlvany, 1991]

This chapter will consider in some depth the constituent elements of the white supremacist constellation as a context for an examination of a single major center of Identity Christian theology, the Church of Israel of Schell City, Missouri headed by pastor Dan Gayman. To dispassionately examine these belief systems is vital on a number of levels. Primary in importance is the need for the dominant culture to realistically differentiate those groups which threaten the institutions and citizens of the United States from those that do not, and to implement rational policy responses on the basis of this information. Further, unbiased scholarly consideration of these movements may reveal much about the apocalyptic mindset, about the historically resonant tendency of a significant number of individuals to divine from the daily dross of the newspapers and the television, signs and portents which, when understood in the light of an inerrant scripture, provides a plan of action through which the normal 'rational calculus' of risks to benefits is set aside in the belief that with the close of the historical process, final victory is assured to the faithful,

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<sup>1</sup> Dan Gayman, "Can There Be Vigilantes in Christendom?," pamphlet published by the Church of Israel, Schell City, Missouri, 1991, pp. 4-5.

<sup>2</sup> Donald S. McAlvany, "Encouragement for the Remnant," *The McAlvany Intelligence Advisor* (December 1991), p. 3.

regardless of how hopeless the odds may appear to the non-believer.<sup>3</sup> For this is the essence of revolutionary millenarianism, and it is a mindset which political authorities from the days of the Taborite rebellion in 15th century Bohemia,<sup>4</sup> no less than the American government agencies charged with bringing to justice the members of the *Brueders Schweigan* (the Order)<sup>5</sup> have been forced to contend.

Yet as the Church of Israel demonstrates, the apocalyptic millenarian mindset does not lead invariably to revolutionary activism. Rather, there is in the "constellation of 'white supremacist' movements" an inherent dynamism which sees millenarian groups as largely quietist, seeking primarily to withdraw to the greatest possible degree from a society seen as inherently contaminating.<sup>6</sup> On occasion, and under circumstances which are still far from clear, these groups may emerge as activist or even violent centers of revolutionary activism. Then, if not destroyed in a hopeless confrontation with government authorities, or more commonly, rent asunder by internal divisions, these groups may return to the withdrawal mode, prayerfully awaiting the End of Days while engaging only selectively with the dominant culture. Such in essence is the case of the Church of Israel.

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<sup>3</sup> For the earliest formulation of this theory, see Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit Of The Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians And Mystical Anarchists Of The Middle Ages* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957, 1970). For a good introduction to the considerable post-Cohn literature on revolutionary millennialism, especially in the non-Western context, see Micheal Adas, *Prophets Of Rebellion : Millenarian Protest Movements Against The European Colonial Order* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979); Sylvia L. Thrupp, ed., *Millennial Dreams In Action: Studies In Revolutionary Religious Movements* (New York: Schocken, 1970); and Bryan Wilson, *Magic and the Millennium* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973).

<sup>4</sup> Howard Kaminsky, *A History of the Hussite Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967); Howard Kaminsky, "Chilliasm and the Hussite Revolution," *Church History* XXVI (1957).

<sup>5</sup> The most comprehensive coverage of the Order to date is the journalistic effort by Kevin Flynn and Gary Gerhardt, *The Silent Brotherhood* (New York: Signet, 1990).

<sup>6</sup> Carried to its logical extreme, the withdrawal of a group into isolated compounds can in itself carry the seeds of confrontation with authorities. See the discussion of Idiosyncratic Sectarians below.

This chapter will open with a consideration of the doctrinal elements of millenarianism which impact on the choice of activism/withdrawal, and a reconsideration of Michael Barkun's 5-point 'white supremacist synthesis'.<sup>7</sup> This examination will be based almost entirely on primary sources: interviews with leading theoreticians of the movement as well as relevant movement documents. Secondary material is of wildly varying quality, ranging from the excellent article by Barkun, James Aho's recent book,<sup>8</sup> to several journalistic endeavors.<sup>9</sup> The most commonly available material, that distributed by the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith<sup>10</sup> and by the Leonard Zeskind of the Atlanta

<sup>7</sup> Michael Barkun, "Millenarian Aspects of 'White Supremacist' Movements," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 4 (October 1989), pp. 409-434.

<sup>8</sup> James A. Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness: Idaho's Christian Patriotism* (Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1990). Cf. Micheal Barkun, review of *The Politics of Righteousness: Idaho's Christian Patriotism*, by James Aho, *Terrorism and Political Violence* 3, Special Issue on Violence and the Sacred in the Modern World (Autumn 1991). Cf. my review of this volume in *Syzygy: A Journal of Alternative Religion and Culture* 1 (Winter 1992), pp. 106-107.

<sup>9</sup> Kevin Flynn and Gary Gerhardt, *The Silent Brotherhood*; James Coates, *Armed and Dangerous: The Rise of the Survivalist Right* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1987); and Phillip Finch, *God, Guts and Guns: A Close Look at the Radical Right* (Seaview: Putnam, 1983).

<sup>10</sup> Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, *Hate Groups In America: A Record of Bigotry and Violence* (New York: ADL, 1988); and Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, *Extremism on the Right: A Handbook* (New York: ADL, 1988). The former volume has a particularly checkered history. In a series of communications from the United States Commission on Civil Rights dated from 8 March 1982-26 March 1982, the volume which the ADL had been commissioned to write for the sum of \$20,000 was ultimately rejected for publication. In the words of Acting Council General Paul Alexander in an internal memo dated 8 March 1982 written to John Hope III, Acting Staff Director of the CCR:

"The ADL report is rank with epithets and labels that only serve to distort the factual accountings of the activities of the KKK and similar organizations."

A second internal memo signed by Gail Gerebenics, Assistant General Council of the CCR and sent on 8 March 1982 notes that only 10 individuals of some 51 persons contacted after being mentioned by the ADL in *Hate Groups In America* replied. All denied the ADL version of their activities or views. These internal CCR documents culminate in the 26 March 1982 letter from John Hope III to Irwin Suall of the ADL, refusing to publish the document under the heading of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.



based Center for Democratic Renewal, is largely undocumented, and must be used with great care.<sup>11</sup>

## The Contemporary Context of the Movement

### I. Conception of the Millennium

By strict definition, the term millenarianism refers to the biblical millennium, a 1,000 year post-historical period seen by Christians as a time of peace and plenty. Contemporary Christian eschatology holds differing theories of the millennium, centering on whether Jesus will return to personally usher in and rule the chiliastic Kingdom (premillennialism), or whether the millennium will be purely the result of human effort, with Jesus' appearance reserved for the final phase of the drama, with the chiliastic Kingdom reaching the stage of sinlessness through the perfection of the human spirit (postmillennialism).<sup>12</sup>

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All documents obtained through a Freedom of Information Act action filed by Laird Wilcox on 21 September 1983.

<sup>11</sup> Leonard Zeskind, *The "Christian Identity" Movement: Analyzing Its Theological Rationalization for Racist and Anti-Semitic Violence* (Atlanta: Center for Democratic Renewal, 1986). Zeskind is more respectful of scholarly practice than the ADL, providing footnotes and some consideration of the historical context. It should be noted that the Center for Democratic Renewal, formerly known as the Anti-Klan Network, is hardly a detached observer of Identity activity. Zeskind since 1978 has been a figure in the Marxist-Leninist community centered in Chicago. Lyn Wells of the CDR and Chip Berlet of the Cambridge, Massachusetts based Political Research Associates, another organization dedicated to opposing the far right, hail from remarkably similar backgrounds. See Laird Wilcox, "Lenny Zeskind, Lyn Wells and the Center for Democratic Renewal Including Chip Berlet and Political Research Associates: The Hidden 'Links' and 'Ties' of an 'Anti-Extremist' Organization," special report from Editorial Research Service of Olathe, Kansas (March 1989) for extensive documentation of these links. The point of this recitation is not to raise the ghost of Sen. Joseph McCarthy, but rather to point up the all too common scenario of one group of extremists setting themselves up as self-styled watchdogs over other groups of extremists.

<sup>12</sup> A good insider recitation of the various millennial positions may be found in, Robert G. Clouse, ed., *The Meaning of the Millennium: Four Views* (Downers Grove, IL:

Increasingly however, scholars have loosened these definitional requirements so as to include not only the Abrahamic traditions, each of which embodies a rich eschatological heritage, but to allow for the analysis of non-Western traditions as well, particularly within the context of revolutionary millenarianism.<sup>13</sup> In this view, the key consideration is whether the belief system emphasizes the reign of a sinless elect over a chiliastic kingdom posited as perfect, and thus a-historical. By adopting this more malleable definition of millenarianism, it is possible to encompass in this examination the full range of movements which profess a white supremacist ideology, but may lack the elements of apocalypticism, of Christianity, or even of overt religiosity. In this view, the primary linking thread in these movements is a pronounced chiliasm, positing the ultimate goal of an utopian society of such perfection as to make its realization impossible within the conventional framework of history.

## II. The Chiliastic Community

Professor Barkun posits four major elements of what he refers to as the white supremacist constellation: Klan groups, Christian Identity groups, explicitly neo-Nazi groups, and agrarian protest groups, with overlapping memberships and a wild proliferation of fly-by-night groupings making it impossible to consider any of these categories as discrete units.<sup>14</sup> In fact, even this diverse listing fails to do justice to the rich

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InterVarsity Press, 1977). A general historical introduction is offered by Michael J. St. Clair, *Millenarian Movements in Historical Context* (New York: Garland, 1992). For a lively history of American millenarian belief, see Timothy Weber, *Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987). Cf. Michael Barkun, "Millenarian Aspects of 'White Supremacist' Movements," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 4 (October 1989), pp. 410-413, for a concise statement of the tenets of American millenarian belief.

<sup>13</sup> Bryan Wilson, "Millenarianism in Comparative Perspective," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 6 (1963-1964), p. 93.

<sup>14</sup> Michael Barkun, "Millenarian Aspects of 'White Supremacist' Movements," p. 414.

imagination of the white supremacist community! To illustrate the profusion of ideological appeals available, I have reformulated Prof. Barkun's categories, dropping the agrarian protest movement as, following the 1985 demise of Roderick Elliot's Colorado based *Primrose and Cattleman's Gazette*,<sup>15</sup> it has become a largely shadow projection of other white supremacist appeals,<sup>16</sup> and adding the categories of Reconstructed Traditions, Single Issue Constituencies and Lone Unguided Missiles, Idiosyncratic Sectarians, and an amorphous category, Hope Seeking a Means to Fulfillment.<sup>17</sup> In almost every case however, overlapping and serial membership patterns, with group solidarity often no more substantial than a name on a mailing list, remains the norm.

1. Ku Klux Klan organizations are highly fragmented, but remain modeled loosely on the Civil War era precedents.<sup>18</sup> Even in this most tradition-bound of belief patterns however, there is considerable evidence of 'modernization', with a new emphasis on public relations

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<sup>15</sup> Conversation with James Coates, 22 July 1990. Cf. Anti-Defamation League, *The American Farmer and the Extremists: An ADL Special Report* (New York: ADL, n.d.), pp. 4-5.

<sup>16</sup> Larry Humphries of the Heritage Library in Velma, Oklahoma, and a loose grouping of Posse Comitatus adherents, seem to have constituted the agrarian protest movement, such as it was. See James Ridgeway, *Blood In The Face* (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 1990), pp. 120-129; Len Martin, *Why 'They' Wanted to Get Gordon Kahl* (Detroit Lakes, Minn.: Pro-American Press, 1983); Capstan Turner and A. J. Lowery, *There Was a Man: The Saga of Gordon Kahl* (Sozo Publishing Co.: Nashville, Tenn., 1985); and James Corcoran, *Bitter Harvest* (New York: Penguin, 1990). In fact, no better evidence can be offered for the lack of an independent agrarian movement than the case of Yorie Kahl, Gordon Kahl's son, whose impassioned appeals to militance are carried in Richard Butler's Aryan Nations newsletter, rather than in any independent farm-oriented vehicle. See Yorie Kahl's 19 page letter written from the penitentiary in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, to Senator Quentin N. Burdick of North Dakota, dated 9 November 1989, in *Aryan Nations Newsletter* 72 (n.d.).

<sup>17</sup> 'Hope seeking a means of fulfillment' is a formulation I owe to Ronald Scott Hand, First Godhi of the Odinist Study Group of Aryan Religions, letter to author 3 January 1992. A *godhi* (fem. *gydhja*) is an elder or priest(ess) of Ásatrú (Odinism).

<sup>18</sup> Michael Barkun, "Millenarian Aspects of 'White Supremacist' Movements," p. 414.

and openness.<sup>19</sup> At the same time, the Klan is coming to serve as an introduction to other racist ideologies, such as Christian Identity, Dualism, Odinism, and the like.<sup>20</sup>

2. The history of Identity theology was outlined in the preceding chapter, while contemporary Christian Identity will be examined at greater length through the microcosm of the Church of Israel below. Here, it will suffice to make a few preliminary observations. Christian Identity, in common with its predecessor, Anglo-Israelism, is a table in which there is a place set for anyone who wishes to partake of the doctrine.

Despite some recent efforts at unity among Identity leaders and adherents,<sup>21</sup> there exists no

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<sup>19</sup> The most intellectually coherent presentation of the 'New Ku Klux Klansman' is offered by Texas Klansman and close associate of Richard Butler, Louis Beam, in what he calls the 'Fifth Era Klan.' These ideas are set out in a series of publications, the *Inter-Klan Newsletter & Survival Alert*. See *Inter-Klan Newsletter & Survival Alert* 4 (c. 1984), p. 9; and *Inter-Klan Newsletter & Survival Alert* 5 (c. 1984), pp. 1-10. Beam has gathered the best of his material into a single volume, *Essays of a Klansman*, and his latest thinking is reflected in the quarterly journal titled ironically in the wake of the Fort Smith trial fiasco, *The Seditonist*.

<sup>20</sup> For example, the innovative blending of Dualism and the KKK by the late Robert Miles in Michigan and of Identity and the KKK by Thom Robb in Arkansas. Letter and material to author from Robert Miles, 1 October 1991; and author's interview with Thom Robb in Chicago, 24 August 1991. Pastor Robb notes that for his Knights of the KKK, the racial message is primary, and the Identity message is there for whoever wants it, but is by no means pushed onto recruits. Odinism has been recently introduced into the Klan's internecine warfare, most notably by Tom Metzger acolyte Dennis McMahon in Oklahoma. This development may be aimed as much at discrediting Thom Robb as it is an expression of religious curiosity. See the book review of an important Ásatrú (Odinist) text in Dennis McMahon's newsletter: Karl Hand, "The Book of Troth by Edred Thorsson," *The Oklahoma Excalibur* (May 1992), p. 8. The review ends with a warning to readers in bold type to the effect that the book's publisher, Llewellyn: "is not a racist publisher, so use discretion."

<sup>21</sup> Such an effort was made at the Scriptures for America Christian Bible Camp which took place on 23 July 1988 at Cedaredge, Colorado under Pete Peters' sponsorship. Emerging from this conclave was a remarkable document drawn up in consultation by fifteen major right wing religious figures, most of whom come from Christian Identity, titled "Remnant Resolves." This document offers a skeletal blueprint for the adoption of biblical government in America which is not unlike the political prescriptions offered by Dan Gayman's Church of Israel below, save that the Remnant Resolves Committee is less committed to submission to authority than COI theology would demand. "Remnant resolves" begins with a process of self renewal within the family, and proceeds to Church Government, Civil Government, Economics, Law, and such specific moral issues as abortion, the prisons, sodomy, gun control, and a firm position that: "It is blasphemous to

center of orthodoxy, with individual Identity pastors offering often widely divergent doctrines, all based on an individualistic approach to biblical hermeneutics. Nonetheless, of the current crop of Identity ministers, those enjoying the greatest respect in Identity circles, men such as Dan Gayman, Richard Butler and Thomas Robb to name a few, all derived their training through a process of teacher-student relationships with leading Identity figures of the immediate post-Second World War generation: Richard Butler with Wesley Swift in California<sup>22</sup> and Gayman and Robb with Colorado Identity teachers, Ken Goff in Denver, Colorado.<sup>23</sup> Ordination too flows from the teacher-student relationship, and constitutes an important event in the life of an Identity congregation.<sup>24</sup>

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regard antichrists as "God's chosen people, and to allow them to rule over or hold public office in a Christian Nation." [p. 9] The Resolves appear in a booklet bearing no publication information, although the cover art is dated 1988, and is distributed through the Remnant Resolves Committee in La Porte, Colorado. The committee includes such major Identity figures as Ted Wieland, Pete Peters, Earl F. Jones, Howard L. Freeman and 'Brig. Gen.' Jack Mohr. How effective this effort at unity will prove is questionable, given the fractious history of the movement, and of the fact that 2 of the 3 Resolutions under Church Government recognize the principles of independence and diversity among churches. The Resolves ends with a short Plan of Action, centering primarily on the further dissemination of the booklet.

<sup>22</sup> See for example, the anonymous "Who What Why When Where? ARYAN NATIONS," an undated pamphlet distributed by the Aryan Nations, which details the relationship of Pastors Swift and Butler. Butler had been introduced to Swift by William Potter Gale, and his turn toward the more violent sectors of Identity may safely be posited to be due to the influence of these teachers. Dan Gayman in fact recalls Butler as incapable of "harming a fly" before his close alignment with the Swift/Gale axis. Interview with Dan Gayman, 9-11 December 1991. Rumors abound that at the end, the relationship was less than amicable. See James Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness*, p. 55; and Kevin Flynn and Gary Gerhardt, *The Silent Brotherhood*, p. 53.

<sup>23</sup> Interview with Thom Robb, 24 August 1991; Interview with Dan Gayman, 9-11 December 1991.

<sup>24</sup> See for example the description of the 1967 ordination of pastor Sheldon Emry, a student of C. O. Stadskev, in Sheldon Emry, "The Seven Sins of Canaan," transcript of 1970 sermon published by the Lord's Covenant Church (Phoenix, Az.: 1986), p. 24. Stadskev himself was fondly remembered by Gerald L. K. Smith in the latter's autobiography, see Gerald L. K. Smith, *Besieged Patriot*, edited by Elma M. Smith and Charles F. Robinson (Eureka Springs, Ak.: Elma M. Smith Foundation, 1978), pp. 299-300. Cf. the photo of the ordination of Doug Evers at the hands of pastors Pete Peters of Colorado and Earl Jones of New Mexico in *Scriptures for America*, Newsletter Volume 1 (1992), p. 10.

Identity theology is always revolutionary,<sup>25</sup> although this concept of revolution involves primarily a non-violent internal dialogue within the Christian tradition.<sup>26</sup> How else could one term an ideology which, in defiance of the world's universally held perceptions, proclaims those who are known as Jews to be imposters, either the demonic offspring of the unholy union of Satan with Eve in the Garden,<sup>27</sup> or the fruit of the

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<sup>25</sup> The term 'revolution' as it is employed in this article is used in two senses: the commonly accepted definition by which a dissident group, sect or individual seeks to overthrow the existing order by force of arms, or more commonly among Identity adherents, a movement which by peaceful persuasion seeks to bring about a no less dramatic break in the continuity of a religious tradition. Historically, success in the latter has often brought about a revolutionary upheaval in the socio-political sphere. Given the primacy of the secular nation-state in the modern era however, a violent reaction in the political sphere appears increasingly remote.

<sup>26</sup> See Lt. Col. Jack Mohr, *Who Are You and Why Are You Here?* (Bay St. Louis, Mississippi: CDPL, n.d.), p. 14:

The curses of God which are now falling on the people of Israel [i.e., America and Europe] worldwide, are not caused by any enemy, such as international Jewry, they come about because of the wilful [sic] disobedience of rebellious Israelites who "want to do their own thing," rather than obey God.

<sup>27</sup> This view is rather ubiquitous in Identity circles, and flows from a particular hermeneutical approach to inerrant text:

I know your hardships and your poverty, and--though you are rich--the slander of the people who falsely claim to be Jews, but are really members of the synagogue of Satan.

Revelations 3:9:

Look, I am going to make the synagogue of Satan--those who falsely claim to be Jews, but are liars, because they are no such thing--I will make them come and fall at your feet and recognize that I have loved you.

And John 8:44

You are of your father the devil; and it is your will to practice the lusts and gratify the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a falsehood, he speaks what is natural to him; for he is a liar and the father of lies and of all that is false.

For various interpretations, see Gerald Winrod, *The Winrod Letter* 158 (March 1978) and any of many expositions by Jack Mohr, whose 'Satan's Kids' moniker has become

conversion of the barbaric Khazar tribe to Judaism,<sup>28</sup> and that in either case, the true heirs of the covenant, of Israel, are in fact the Caucasian peoples of Europe? From the point of view of Identity adherents, like the little boy in the fable who in his innocent attachment to truth loosed the populace from its fear and so set them free by simply shouting out the 'plain truth' that the emperor had no clothes, the very act of proclaiming the truth as they know it is the ultimate revolutionary act.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, the Identity believer also accrues significant benefits from the sincere profession of Identity faith. The venerable patriarch of Christian Identity, the late Howard Rand, describes this feeling in terms of a kind of internal liberation, an almost Zen-like *satori* experience following which the veils of illusion will be stripped away and the esoteric and the exoteric meanings of scripture will become one:

In the first place, to recognize who the Kingdom people are, to correctly identity the modern Israel of God in the world today, would provide the key to unlock the secrets of revelation, while the purport of the messages of the prophets would become correspondingly clear. Secondly, if Christendom would awaken to the realization that the Kingdom of God was established on earth at

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widely used in Identity and other right wing racist circles. For a good, brief formulation of this doctrine, see Jack Mohr, "Exploding the 'Chosen People' Myth," undated self-published pamphlet. Lt Col. Mohr is also expanding on this theology in his newsletter, *The Christian Patriot Crusader*. See for example, *The Christian Patriot Crusader* 4 (December, 1991), pp. 1-17.

<sup>28</sup> The primary source cited for this view is Arthur Koestler, *The Thirteenth Tribe* (New York: Random House, 1976). While Koestler is the most influential source of the Khazar theory in the movement today, earlier sources are sometimes mentioned, in particular the 1911 version of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, since purged by an unseen hand from later editions. For extended quotations from this article, see Raymond Bray, "The Beast With Two Horns Like a Lamb," *American Ephraimite* 5 (September/October 1991), pp. 12-13. The primary source for the encyclopedia references is Elizabeth Dilling, *The Jewish Religion: Its Influence Today* (Torrence, CA: Noontide Press, 1983). Cf. the lucid conspiracy theorist and senior Identity pastor Earl F. Jones, "Lesson in History Part 9," *Christian Crusade for Truth Intelligence Newsletter* (July-August 1990), p. 5. Koestler discusses his own sources in *The Thirteenth Tribe*, Appendix II, pp. 206-214.

<sup>29</sup> Howard B. Rand, "What Does It Matter if We Are Israel?" *Special Alert-No. 103* (Fall 1988).

Mount Sinai, there would be an instant comprehension of the whole story the Bible tells.<sup>30</sup>

Rarely however, will Identity adherents go beyond the simple assertion of faith, and actively seek to wrest by force of arms the mantle of Israel from the Jewish people whom they see as demonic usurpers. Political quietism is in fact more the norm, with some centers of Identity thought even going so far as to seek to wean adherents from the corrosive racism which has become imbedded in much of the movement.

One prominent example of this attempt to create an Identity theology which lacks overt racism may be found in the work of Raymond Bray of the The Lord's Work Bible Study Center in Lucas, Kentucky. Pastor Bray has earned the enmity of many in Identity circles by arguing against the identification of blacks and orientals with the "beasts of the field" (Gen. 2:19-20) or the view that there existed pre-Adamic races.<sup>31</sup> He does however, fully embrace the demonization of the Jew through the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, Henry Ford's *Dearborn Independent* series, and Arthur Koestler's Khazar theory.<sup>32</sup>

Going further, pastor Joseph Newton of the American Heritage Identity fellowship in North Carolina, embraces the core doctrine of the Caucasian peoples of Europe being in fact the remnant of the lost ten tribes of Israel, but rejects the "two-seeds doctrine," which holds that Jews are the demonic offspring of the union of Eve and Satan. More, he decries in the strongest terms the pervasive "hatred" practiced in much of Identity Christianity:

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<sup>30</sup> Howard Rand, "The Servant People: A Brochure on Anglo-Saxon Identity and Responsibility," pamphlet distributed by Destiny Publishers (n.d.), p. 13.

<sup>31</sup> See for example, Raymond Bray, "The Strangers Among Us," an unpublished and undated essay which emphasizes the Biblical injunctions to treat the stranger (non-Israelite) with kindness (Ex.22:21; Ex. 23:9; Lev. 19:33-34; etc.).

<sup>32</sup> On pastor Bray's views of racial origins, see Raymond Bray, "The Curse of Apostasy Upon America," *American Ephraimite* 5 (September/October 1991), pp. 1-7. On his view of the Jews, see Raymond Bray, "The Beast With Two Horns Like a Lamb," *American Ephraimite* 5 (September/October 1991), pp. 7-15.



Some of our C. I. [Christian Identity] people are very anti-Jewish & Anti-Black, etc. Some of our C. I. people are Neo-Nazi, skinheads, etc...But my little independent C.I. fellowship does not endorse NAZI, KKK, SKINHEADS etc.!!!...Jews are people whom God loves and Jesus died for their sins as He died for your and my sins. God wants everyone to be saved. [all emphasis in original]<sup>33</sup>

pastor Newton is virtually alone among Identity pastors in seeking to maintain cordial relations with fundamentalists, despite the latter's pronounced support for Zionism.

Striking a similarly moderate tone, Ralph Shivers, the self-effacing editor of the *Identity News* published in Onamia, Minnesota, rejects any form of discrimination, anger or hatred, while remaining within the mainstream of Christian Identity thought. For Mr. Shivers (he declines to claim sufficient knowledge of scripture to be deemed a pastor), the primary mission of Christian Identity is to make the remnant of Israel aware of its identity while at the same time treating all others of God's creation with love and respect.<sup>34</sup> While accepting the common Identity vision of the conspiratorial nature of history, he is nonetheless not entirely certain who the conspirators are, and in any case: "It's the conspirators we need to deal with.. not the blacks and/or the Jews."<sup>35</sup>

Finally, underlining the ambivalence of this reexamination of Identity doctrines comes a most unusual offering from pastor Fred G. Butler of Elizabethtown, Kentucky. In his journal, *The Shepherd's Voice*, pastor Butler offers an apparently straightforward litany of Identity views and sources, including contributions from James Warner of the most extreme wing of racist Identity, a touching letter from the wife of a white prisoner, and

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<sup>33</sup> Letter from pastor Joseph Newton, 15 February 1992. In the same vein, pastor Mike Benjamins, Jr. of the Remnant Church of Klamath Falls, Oregon, notes that his congregation maintains an allegiance to the Identity doctrine of the descent of the Anglo-Saxon and Celtic peoples from the Ten Tribes, but holds that the current state of Israel represents prophetic Judah. This view has led him to reject anti-Semitism in any form, and thus to "withdraw from the mainstream patriot movement due to significant differences..." Letter from Mike Benjamins, Jr., 15 April 1992.

<sup>34</sup> Ralph Shivers, "Statement of Belief," *Identity News* (December 1991), p. 2.

<sup>35</sup> "Letters," *Identity News* (December 1991), p. 6.

from pastor Butler himself, a note decrying the "unjust" sentencing of two high spirited Kentucky teenagers to seventeen years in prison because "they burned a cross in a black friend's yard as a prank!"<sup>36</sup>

Yet most of the March and April issue of the *The Shepherd's Voice* is taken up with a reprint of a series of 1990 articles in which pastor Butler recounts his trip to Israel! More, he breaks bread with Jews--Zionist Jews from a northern kibbutz at which he stayed--and has nothing but praise for the people and the kibbutz way of life. Predictably, when printed in 1990, this series of articles occasioned quite a storm in Identity circles. Pastor Butler's 1992 reply to this criticism is interesting:

(When this article appeared in 1990, there were some very negative comments about us eating with 'Jews', etc. My answer is this: "All 'Jews' are not false Judah." This trip showed me that there were true Israelites living in the land of Judeah, calling themselves 'Jews', just as there are true Israelites in this country calling themselves 'gentiles'. Until we get off our hatred trips and become servants of Yahveh, God, we will never be servants of Him.

My direct commission is to teach true Israel who they are, and where they fit in with our Creator's plan. If one cannot accept their calling, they are not serving, but standing in the way of His other servants. I accepted my calling. If this bothers you personally, I ask you to study and pray for guidance, not only for you, but for me. If you are still upset with me, go your way in peace).<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Fred G. Butler, "Dearly Beloved," *The Shepherd's Voice* (March and April 1992), p. 12.

<sup>37</sup> Fred G. Butler, "Trip of a Lifetime (Part 1)," *The Shepherd's Voice* (March and April 1992), p. 3. Pastor Butler's reference to the presence in Israel of "true Israelites" presents some difficulties. While most Identity ministries find that there exists the possibility of "true Israelites" among Israeli Jews, these would exist, if at all, among Sephardim who had never on the one hand, married into the Ashkenazi seed line which is posited as the product of Khazar and Edomite racial strains, or on the other hand, with any of the nations not bound in the Mosaic Covenant. In practice, these restrictions would preclude a definite determination that any modern day Jew is a remnant of "true Israel." Still less would it be likely that pastor Butler found a Sephardi candidate for "true Israel" among the primarily Ashkenazi members of the Kibbutz Movement.

We are then faced with two very elastic models of Identity as a revolutionary ideology: that which sees its revolutionary appeal as internal, a revolution within the religious tradition, and that which, like some members of the *Brueders Schweigan*, seek to actively destroy the surrounding culture, and to so usher in the chiliastic kingdom of the elect by force of arms. Whether in the active or withdrawal mode however, Christian Identity is invariably millenarian.

3. Explicitly neo-Nazi groups, sporting such names as the National Alliance headed by William L. Pierce, author of the controversial *Turner Diaries*,<sup>38</sup> the Euro-American Alliance (Maj. D.V. Clerkin, "fuehrer"),<sup>39</sup> the American National Socialist Party (Hale McGee, ("fuehrer"),<sup>40</sup> the American Nazi Party (Jim Burford, "fuehrer"),<sup>41</sup> and many, many more. Included here too are 'Hitler Cultists', professing unbroken fealty to German

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<sup>38</sup> Andrew Macdonald (pseud.), *The Turner Diaries* (Arlington, Va.: National Vanguard Books, 1978). MacDonald, a pseudonym for Pierce whose modesty does not prevent him from placing his real name on the copyright, in 1989 produced a second novel, *Hunter*, which reflects tactical changes in the wake of the large scale government crackdown on the far right following the activities of the Order. Where the *Turner Diaries* presented a fictionalized account of the formation of a successful mass revolutionary movement, *Hunter* presents a model of lone wolf guerilla tactics. Andrew Macdonald (pseud.), *Hunter* (Arlington, Va.: National Vanguard Books, 1989). It is a model which may have been influenced by the phantom assassins from the dawn of time, the Phineas Priesthood, as described in 459 rambling pages by Richard Kelly Hoskins, *Vigilantes of Christendom* (Lynchburg, Va.: Virginia Publishing Co., 1990). For an excellent example of how the violent racist fantasies of material like that of Hoskins and the fears (real or otherwise) of the organizations which exist to monitor the far right interact, see the Center for Democratic Renewal treatment of the Phineas Priesthood: "Beckwith to be Tried Again for 1963 Evers Murder," *The Monitor* 24 (December 1991). For an extended meditation on *Vigilantes of Christendom* as a model for the contemporary millenarian revolutionary mind set, see Jeffrey Kaplan, "Vigilantes of Christendom," Review article, *Syzygy* 1:3, (Summer 1992), pp. 271-273.

<sup>39</sup> Publications include the *Euro-American Quarterly* and the *Talon*.

<sup>40</sup> Publishers of *New Facts*.

<sup>41</sup> No known publications.

National Socialism as constituted before 1945.<sup>42</sup> These groups tend to be tiny, fractious, and in the words of one long time adherent who with some difficulty managed to extract himself from this milieu, composed of "mama's boys, drifters, jobless loiterers, thieves and clowns."<sup>43</sup> Yet it would be a mistake to eliminate these elements of the white supremacist community from consideration in the millenarian context. On the one hand, the substantial degree of cross membership, simultaneous and serial, of neo-Nazis with other ideological appeals, particularly Christian Identity<sup>44</sup> and the reconstructed traditions,<sup>45</sup> make the isolation of any one element of the community problematic. In addition, the role of neo-Nazis in the white supremacist movement may lend some support

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<sup>42</sup> A good example is the German based NSDAP/AO headed by Gerhard Lauck. Through translations of its newspaper *New Order*, the NSDAP/AO reaches an audience throughout Europe, the Americas and South Africa, with its primary appeal directed to skinheads. *New Order* in America is published and distributed from Lincoln, Nebraska.

<sup>43</sup> Letter to author dated 5 November 1991. Name withheld.

<sup>44</sup> This cross-membership pattern is decried by a number of Identity sources. Jack Mohr states this feeling well:

Others have used the Identity Movement as a base for violent actions against a corrupt government they rightfully hate. By their violent actions, they have caused an already hostile media to label all Identity Christians as "radical members of the right wing extremists; neo-Nazis; Fascists; KKK, haters.

Lt. Col. Jack Mohr, *Who Are You and Why Are You Here?* (Bay St. Louis, Mississippi: CDPL, n.d.), p. 21. A classic example of this drift through racist ideologies may be seen in Order founding member Gary Yarborough, who recalls: "First, I joined the Ku Klux Klan, then I got involved with National Socialism and Kingdom Identity." "Interview with Gary Yarborough," *WAR* 2 (n.d.), p. 24.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid. Undated letter from the publisher of *Today's Aryan Woman*, a National Socialist publication. Prior to the appearance of this journal, both the publisher and her husband had been Christian Identity adherents, putting out the Identity journals *Christian Patriot Woman* and *Christian Frontline*. Consider as well the impact of the *Turner Diaries* on the members of the Order, most of whom were Identity adherents or sympathizers. Kevin Flynn and Gary Gerhardt, *The Silent Brotherhood*, p. 93. Author's telephone conversation with the betrayer of the *Bruders Schweigen*, Tom Martinez, 24 October 1991. Martinez is now in the federal Witness Protection program following an unsuccessful attempt at decapitation by an Order sympathizer.

to academic theorists who have identified a definitive element of chiliasm at the heart of the original German National Socialist dream of a 1,000 year reich.<sup>46</sup>

4. The Reconstructed Traditions include all of the many racist ideologies which are based on a conscious attempt to resurrect, often in fanciful forms, religious traditions of the past. These may be Christian or Christian heresies, Robert Miles' Dualism for example, or they may be pre-Christian or neo-pagan, Odinism is the prime example here. The reconstructed traditions are important not only in themselves as interesting examples of how 'new religions' may base themselves on the revitalization of historically resonant belief systems, but because they serve as primary sources of recruitment for the very large number of individuals in America whose alienation from the dominant culture makes them receptive to an appeal which is both millenarian and racist. Thus, the primary thrust of pastor Miles' Dualist appeal is towards a prison ministry,<sup>47</sup> while Odinism functions as

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<sup>46</sup> Norman Cohn was the first to publicize this theory. See Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium* (New York: Oxford University, 1961), concluding chapter. Cohn's identification of the Nazi's as the heir to an almost unbroken line of medieval millenarian excitements, featuring such widely disparate actors as the Crusaders of the first three Crusades (c. 1095-1190), the reclusive abbot Joachim of Fiore (d. 1202), the antinomian Free Spirit heresies (12th-15th centuries), the revolutionary Taborites (15th c.), and many more made a strong initial impact within the scholarly community. Considerable criticism followed however, centered primarily on Prof. Cohn's descriptions of the popular classes most affected by millennial excitements, of the "amoral supermen" posited as the leadership cadre of the movements, and of the socio-economic and political factors which he believed to be the cause of such outbreaks. Less stated, but perhaps as critical to the reception of Cohn's theory, was the persistent sub-text running throughout the book which rather strongly implied that the history of the Christian West was in its essence an anti-Semitic pogrom on the grand scale! Prof. Cohn was forced to revise his work several times. By the 1970 edition of *The Pursuit of the Millennium*, the Third Reich as a millennial revolution came to be down played considerably, as was the rather pessimistic interpretation of Western history. However, later scholars, most notably Michael Barkun and James M. Rhodes, have adopted Cohn's theories, adding some significant qualifications in the process. Michael Barkun, *Disaster and the Millennium* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), pp. 186-194; James M. Rhodes, *The Hitler Movement: A Modern Millenarian Revolution* (Stanford, CA.: Hoover Institution Press, 1980), p. 18.

<sup>47</sup> The published vehicle for this appeal is the newsletter, *Beyond the Bars...The Stars!*. It is a separate publication from the more widely distributed forum for Miles' views, the newsletter *From the Mountain*. There have been however, on occasion, joint issues published.

part of the distinct subculture of wiccans and neo-pagans.<sup>48</sup> Together, the reconstructed traditions have the potential to greatly increase the numbers of individuals who are aware of the white supremacist appeal, even if few of these potential recruits ever adopt the ideology of white supremacy.<sup>49</sup>

Robert Miles, an avuncular racist,<sup>50</sup> was the genial grandfatherly figure who perhaps more than any other individual served to link together the diverse strands of the white supremacist constellation.<sup>51</sup> He was also a man who spent time in federal prison for

<sup>48</sup> For a good overview of the wiccan (witchcraft) and neo-pagan community in contemporary America, see Margot Adler, *Drawing Down the Moon* (Boston, Beacon Press, 1986).

<sup>49</sup> This observation is the product of numerous conversations and formal interview with members of the wiccan and neo-pagan subculture. Almost without exception, every individual I spoke with had some knowledge of Christian Identity--a familiarity which few members of the academic community or the general public display. For excellent presentations of how, in earlier times, millenarian ideas competed with occult and other esoteric religious appeals for the allegiance of a 'community of seekers' whose existence was often barely known by the dominant culture, see James H. Billington, *Fire in the Minds of Men: Origins of the Revolutionary Faith* (New York: Basic Books, 1980); Clarke Garrett, *Respectable Folly: Millenarians and the French Revolution in France and England* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975); and J. F. C. Harrison, *The Second Coming: Popular Millenarianism 1780-1850* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1979).

<sup>50</sup> In pastor Miles' words, "We are not Identity. We are Dualists, a form of Cathar theology. But--we are racists--open but called Identity churches by the press, ADL and FBI." [*all emphasis in original*] Letter to author dated 1 October 1991.

<sup>51</sup> For secondary source coverage of this role, see for example James Ridgeway, *Blood In The Face*, pp. 81-87; and Kevin Flynn and Gary Gerhardt, *The Silent Brotherhood*. Miles' appeal was in fact so broad, and his theology so elastic, that it is through his Mountain Church that a direct linkage can be found with the racist elements of Odinism. See for example, the elegiac treatment of the Vikings ("VES HEILL! OLD NORSE") in *From the Mountain* (November-December 1985), pp. 1-4; and the more general wiccan/neo-pagan appeal on the occasion of Samhain (Halloween) in *From the Mountain* (September-October 1987). Miles was at once a leader in the Michigan KKK, a Dualist priest (who always referred those for whom Dualism is too rich an intellectual stew to Identity (especially through the Richard Butler prison broad sheet, *The Way*), and a man whose farm was on occasion used for neo-pagan rites. Truly, a racist for all seasons. On the interaction between Dualism and Identity, see pastor Robert Miles, "The Identity of Dualism and The Duality of Identity," pamphlet published by the Mountain Church, Cohactah, Michigan, n.d.

bombing empty school buses and was accused at the 1988 Fort Smith trial of having supplied a member of the Order with a drum of cyanide with which to poison the water supply of an unnamed northwestern city.<sup>52</sup> His Dualism was much in keeping with his personality: an imaginative act of selective retrieval in which the primary focus is on the 12th century French sect of manichaean dualists, the Cathari, with secondary elements drawn from Genesis, the Book of Jubilees and various other intertestamental texts, as well as selected aspects of Identity doctrine, which are brought together to present the white race as a race of giants, a superhuman elite who have but to realize their inherent greatness to be freed of the travail of this earth, and to return from whence they came: to the stars, to the Light:

We came to this earth. We are not akin to those who were made of it nor were created on it. The Sixth Day (soulless non-white male and female based on Gen.1:26-27) and the Eighth Day creations (Adam and Eve)<sup>53</sup> are in our blood line of the flesh, but they are not

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<sup>52</sup> On the less savory aspects of his past legal entanglements, see Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, *Extremism on the Right: A Handbook*, pp. 130-132. Pastor Miles was acquitted of the Fort Smith charge. See his amusing recounting of the Fort Smith charges in, Robert Miles, "White Separatist or Aryan Seditious?" undated pamphlet issued by the Mountain Kirk, Cohoctah, Michigan:

Why bother with an army, navy or airforce if two old men [Miles and Richard Butler], plus some not so old...form such a threat to the mighty power of this goliath called the USA? Do you really think that there is an underground army, sort of Geriatric League on Wheelchairs, that is threatening the power of La Cesspool Grande, DC? (p. 5)

There is much irony in Miles' theology, and in his life. See the humorous biography provided in the above pamphlet for example, or simply consider the implications of an anti-Semite being charged with "poisoning wells."

<sup>53</sup> There is a striking irony in Miles' theology which no scholar of religion could fail to remark. A touchstone of the anti-semitic ideology common to each of the adherents covered in this article is an unflinching belief that the Babylonian Talmud is the most evil book ever written. This belief refers primarily to the writings of the Rev. I. B. Pranaitis, *The Talmud Unmasked* (St. Petersburg, 1892) and Elizabeth Dilling, *The Jewish Religion: Its Influence Today*. Mrs. Dilling's volume was originally titled *The Plot Against Christianity*. Ironically, pastor Miles based much of his cosmology on the Enoch literature preserved in the intertestamental texts, which elaborate the intercourse between the Angels and the daughters of men which appears in the Bible in Genesis 6:1-4. Neil Forsyth argues

of our soul lineage. The soul, your true self, rides in the flesh as a driver rides in a vehicle. Yet they are not one and the same. You enter the Old Testament briefly, and are noted in Genesis 6:1-4. You came to earth and took daughters of men! You were mighty and men of renown! You were GIANTS in the beginning! You still carry the ASTRAL SEED within your flesh. That seed is pure and untouched by all the matings with earth creatures. You can regain the powers and can be again the Giants of this earth! Prisoners of the flesh, prisoners of chains, you shall be free if you so will it and follow the light! [all emphasis in original]<sup>54</sup>

Robert Miles lost his wife to cancer early in 1993. During her convalescence, *From the Mountain* began to recycle earlier stories, publishing in particular a number of photographs of comrades who had long since had succumbed to age and infirmity. Within months of his wife's passing, Robert Miles too passed away, and with him, *From the Mountain* and *Beyond the Bars...the Stars!*, the lone publications in the white supremacist world to consistently employ humor and eschew bitterness, too passed from the scene.

Dualism, with its near deification of an elite core of the white race, may be presumed to appeal most strongly to those who find themselves at the most distant fringes of society: the convicts, the impoverished, and the outsiders. Odinism offers a similar ideological appeal, but one which appeals most strongly to individuals alienated from both society and conventional religion. It is an ideology which is as explicitly anti-Christian, and often anti-Jewish and exclusivist in terms of racial minority groups, but even here, there is a diversity of opinion and practice. The endeavor common to each of the many groups of Odinists is to reconstruct as nearly as possible in contemporary America the form, if not necessarily the substance, of the ancient Norse tradition. In so doing, certain texts, primarily the Eddas<sup>55</sup> of ancient Norse poetic mythology, are subjected to a

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convincingly that these motifs may themselves be traced back to Babylonian archetypes, circa 1800-600 BC. See Neil Forsyth, *The Old Enemy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), pp. 160-191.

<sup>54</sup> *Beyond the Bars...The Stars!* (June 1983), p. 1.

<sup>55</sup> "The Wisdom From the Edda," pamphlet published by the Giallerhorn Book Service, a Division of the Odinist Fellowship of Crystal River, Florida, 1981. For the Eddas



hermeneutical process, the result of which invariably seems to reflect the pre-existing political stance of the adherents. There is in Odinism a great range of belief and action; from the political activism and extreme racialism of the Order's David Lane,<sup>56</sup> the Nation of Odin in Toronto,<sup>57</sup> the Odinist Fellowship of Crystal River, Florida,<sup>58</sup> and the Odinists

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themselves, see Jean I. Young, trans., *The Prose Edda of Snorri Sturluson* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966). The range of mythological motifs based on the Eddic and Saga literature is gathered in Jacob Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, James S. Stallybrass, trans., 4 Volumes, (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1976); and R. B. Anderson, *Norse Mythology; or, The Religion of Our Forefathers, Containing All of the Myths of the Eddas, Systemized and Interpreted* (Chicago: S. C. Griggs and Co., 1876), to name but a few volumes. The first revival of Odinism in its racist form was attempted in the 1930s by an eccentric Australian; Alexander Rud Mills, *The Odinist Religion Overcoming Jewish Christianity* (Melbourne: A. R. Mills, 1933). Currently, the most important theorist is arguably Edred Thorsson, an avowed opponent of the racist drift some sectors of Odinism. See Edred Thorsson, *The Book of Troth* (St. Paul, Minn.: Llewellyn, 1992). Thorsson, whose real name is Stephen E. Flowers, is a Ph. D. scholar of German Philology from Texas whose dissertation was published in 1986. Stephen E. Flowers, *Runes and Magic: Magical Formulaic Elements in the Older Runic Tradition* (New York: Peter Lang, 1986). Still in his academic guise, Flowers published what at this writing appears to be the only scholarly article on the revival of Odinism: Stephen E. Flowers, "Revival of Germanic Religion in Contemporary Anglo-American Culture," *The Mankind Quarterly* XXI, (Spring 1981), pp. 279-294. For a full consideration of the history of Odinism and its largely non-racist form, Ásatrú, see Chapter 4.

<sup>56</sup> Interview with pastor Dan Gayman, Dec. 9-11, 1991. Bruce Pierce, an Order member currently serving a 250 year federal prison sentence, claims that not only Lane, but Bob Mathews himself, the founder of the Order, was an Odinist. Richard Kelly Hoskins, *Vigilantes of Christendom*, p. 433. Hoskins provides in this work an analysis of the Order, and determines that the betrayal which doomed the Order was inevitable due to the nefarious presence of Odinism, which precluded God's favor on the organization's activities. Going further, Hoskins finds in the emergence of Odinism evidence of a conspiracy against Christianity by the demonic hybrid which he (and many others in the 'White Supremacist Constellation') refer to as Judeo-Christianity. Judeo-Christianity is in fact little more than what religious scholars have referred to since the 1960s as civil religion. See *Vigilantes of Christendom*, pp. 435-442. For a concise recitation of the nature of Judeo-Christianity, see "Can Anything be Judeo-Christian?" undated pamphlet issued by the Virginia Christian Israelites of Round Hill, Virginia.

<sup>57</sup> "The Awakening of a New Saga," *Thor: Hammer of the Gods* 3 (c. 1977). In this issue, a fictional story manages to collect in 12 pages the majority of anti-Semitic stereotypes known to the author. The remarkable feature of the document however, is the commentary by High Priest Paul Hartmann which holds that in contrast to the evil of the alleged practice of ritual murder by the Jews, the same act is clearly enjoined by the Norse texts as holy, and indeed, "Aryans in the American South have been practicing the traditional method of sacrifice in their traditional 'lynching ceremony,' which is the object of hysterical persecution by anti-white elements." (p. 13)

involved with the journal *Quarterstaff*,<sup>59</sup> to such quietist groupings as the now defunct Ásatrú Free Assembly,<sup>60</sup> The Ring of Troth, the Ásatrú Alliance,<sup>61</sup> and the Odinist Study Group of Aryan Religions of Lafayette, Indiana.<sup>62</sup>

As the division between these racist and non-racist Ásatrú groupings indicate, the efforts of Odinists to reconstruct the Teutonic spirit have attracted two very different constituencies. Both groups evince a sincere pride in the Germanic and Norse racial and cultural heritage, but even among some non-racist theorists there is a very fine line separating ethnic pride from racial mysticism.<sup>63</sup> Such theories, when added to Odinist attempts to reclaim ideas and symbols, most notably the sun wheel or swastika, from their current popular association with Nazism,<sup>64</sup> proved to be an irresistible attraction to certain

<sup>58</sup> Letter from Mrs. Else Christensen, Odinist Fellowship, 17 July 1991. "What is Odinism?," pamphlet published by the Odinist Fellowship, Crystal River, Florida, 1991; and "Odinism and the Odinist Fellowship," pamphlet published by the Odinist Fellowship, Crystal River, Florida, n.d.

<sup>59</sup> Margot Adler, *Drawing Down the Moon*, p. 571, n. 47.

<sup>60</sup> Letter from Ron Hand, Odinist Study Group, 5 November 1991. Cf. Margot Adler, *Drawing Down the Moon*, pp. 275-279.

<sup>61</sup> The Ring of Troth and the Ásatrú Alliance are considered at length in Chapter 4.

<sup>62</sup> Letters from Ron Hand, Odinist Study Group, 9 September 1991 and 5 November 1991.

<sup>63</sup> It should be noted that there are kindreds within Asatru who reject the notion that Odinism is based on ethnicity in any sense of the term. To these adherents, the Norse heritage is a rich source of myths and symbols which would be of benefit to anyone, regardless of their racial or ethnic background. "Invisigoth," *Ask and Embla* 1 (forthcoming), pp. 4-5. This journal is the organ of the newly formed Ásatrú Fellowship which grew out of the Old Northwest Kindred, formerly associated with the Ásatrú Alliance. The article attacks the neo-Nazi elements in the Ásatrú movement, singling out for particular criticism a "major figure in the Ásatrú Alliance [Mike Murray]" whose 'youthful indiscretions' included association with the George Lincoln Rockwell's American Nazi Party. More generally, the article decries 20 years of racist drift among some prominent Ásatrú writers, and concludes with a paraphrase of an "Old European saying that there are three things one cannot be at the same time, honest, intelligent and a Nazi."

<sup>64</sup> Edred Thorsson, *The Book of Troth*, pp. 110-111.

members of the 'white supremacist constellation', and in particular to neo-Nazis. National Socialists seem to have been attracted to Odinism from the earliest days of the Ásatrú Free Assembly,<sup>65</sup> but the influx became so marked that, in 1987, at an althing [gathering of kindreds], they sought to take over the organization. The putsch failed, and Steve McNallen dissolved the Ásatrú Free Assembly which until that time was the only national organization linking Odinist kindreds or groupings throughout the United States.<sup>66</sup> Of the AFA's successors, the Ásatrú Alliance is still ongoing, and the Ring of Troth, following some internal difficulties, is currently in the process of being reorganized.<sup>67</sup> Thus, in this pattern of interaction with other components of the white supremacist constellation, and in its impossible search for a reconstructed way of life, Odinism too fits comfortably into the millenarian framework of the white supremacist community.<sup>68</sup>

5. Idiosyncratic Sectarians are groups whose structure more nearly approximates a cult group, characterized by a single all-powerful charismatic leader without whose leadership

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<sup>65</sup> Particularly through Mike Murray, who would take over the corpse of the Ásatrú Free Assembly in the form of the Asatru Alliance. See Mike Murray, "The State of the Alliance," *Vor Tru*, number 30 (Fall 2238 Runic, 1988 C.E.), pp. 6-9. On Murray's past association with neo-Nazi groups, conversation with Phil Nearing of the Ásatrú Fellowship, 25 July 1992.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., p. 28; conversation with Phil Nearing, 25 July 1992.

<sup>67</sup> The first issue of the AFA's official organ, *Vor Tru*, to be published under the aegis of the Ásatrú Alliance: *Vor Tru*, number 30 (Fall 2238 Runic, 1988 C.E.). The Ring of Troth's journal is *Idduna*. *Vor Tru* tends to function as a newsletter, linking kindreds across the country, while *Idduna* is a more cerebral affair, concentrating on theology, history and magical theory under the editorship of Diane Ross and later Ed Van Cura. Edred Thorsson was a frequent contributor.

<sup>68</sup> Indeed, there exists in Odinism a myth cycle centering on *Ragnorak*, a "millennial" event in which the structure of the old world was destroyed and the world we know today was born. *Ragnorak* as it appears in the Prose Edda also contains elements of the rebirth of the dead god, Baldur, which have strong Christian connotations. R. B. Anderson, *Norse Mythology; or, The Religion of Our Forefathers, Containing All of the Myths of the Eddas, Systemized and Interpreted* (Chicago: S. C. Griggs and Co., 1876), pp. 413-438.

the group could not survive, than a political or religious movement. These groups may have started out in a particular camp, particularly that of the Klan or Christian Identity, but in the course of their development, there occurred a marked change in the group's structural dynamic. This change often follows a withdrawal from the surrounding society into isolated compounds where increasing psychological and physical isolation, a shared sense of persecution, and the increasing dominance of the group by a single charismatic, authoritarian leader leads sometimes (although not inevitably) to a powerful strain of antinomianism. Tragedy is never far behind such a development.<sup>69</sup> And such tragedy struck at the Rulo, Nebraska compound ruled in absolute fashion by a survivalist and Posse Comitatus adherent, Michael Ryan. A believer like some in the Identity movement in plural marriage and the sacrality of 'white seed', Ryan, in the isolation of Rulo, came over time to claim all women (and girls having reached the age of menstruation), as his own. Male followers were forced into public displays of homosexuality. Punishment too was sexual, involving acts of incest and bestiality. And in the end, of murder, most notably a five year old child.<sup>70</sup> And similar doings were reported at the compound of the highly unstable Identity leader James Ellison at Zarepath-Horab in southern Missouri, the headquarters of the evocatively styled The Covenant, the Sword, and the Arm of the Lord (CSA). The oddities practiced by Ellison, who came to be contemptuously referred to as

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<sup>69</sup> This pattern has a long and sad history among millenarian movements of the past. The Taborite rebellion spawned, under the impact of isolation and the appearance of a Free Spirit appeal, the antinomian Adamites; the 16th century Jewish false messiah Sabbatai Zevi would leave, in the wake of his apostasy, failure and death, a fertile field for the forms of antinomianism practiced by the followers of Jacob Frank; and in our own day the early survivalist appeal of Jim Jones of the People's Temple, after several ideological transformations, reemerged in the isolation of the jungles of Guyana with tragic results. It should therefore come as no surprise that in a few cases, isolated Identity compounds in the rural United States would follow the same path. On the developments at Tabor, see Howard Kaminsky, *A History of the Hussite Revolution*. On Frankism, see Gershom Sholem, *The Messianic Idea in Judaism* (New York: Schocken, 1971), pp. 122-141. And on Jim Jones, see Tim Reiterman, *Raven* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1982).

<sup>70</sup> James Coates, *Armed and Dangerous: The Rise of the Survivalist Right*, ch. 5, presents this episode in somewhat sordid detail.

'King James of the Ozarks' in recognition of his regal pretensions by Robert Miles, would come out at the Fort Smith trial with the government presenting Ellison as its star witness.<sup>71</sup>

Physical isolation however is not a requirement for inclusion in this category. Most striking among the dispersed sectarian appeals may be Ben Klassen's Church of the Creator (COC). The COC centers on the belief that Christian Identity's attempts to wrest back the divine covenant from the Jews is misguided. Rather, the COC holds that the nearly universal perception that Christianity is built upon the foundation of Judaism, and that Jesus himself was a Jew, is in fact correct. Thus, Christianity itself is Jewish and therefore anathema--as is the society which would embrace such a Jewish religion (styled JOG or Jewish Occupation Government rather than the more usual ZOG or Zionist Occupation Government).<sup>72</sup> In its place, the COC has erected a religion it calls Creativity; an odd blend of rewritten Christianity, health faddism, and histrionic racism. All of this is presided over by Klassen (styling himself as Pontifex Maximus), the imprisoned Rudy Stanko as heir apparent, and a 'priesthood' composed of anyone willing to submit an application and a check or money order.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Kevin Flynn and Gary Gerhardt, *The Silent Brotherhood*, pp. 256-261. For a running commentary on Ellison's Fort Smith performance, see Robert Miles, *From the Mountain* (March-April 1987-March-April 1988).

<sup>72</sup> A recent attempt to reconcile the ZOG/JOG controversy was suggested by Paul Hall, editor of the *Jubilee Identity* newspaper. Hall offers BOG (Babylonian Occupational Government) as both more inclusive and more evocative of the conspiracy. See the reprint "Victims of B.O.G.," *CBA Bulletin* 8 (January 1991), p. 1.

<sup>73</sup> The primary texts for the COC are Ben Klassen's *Nature's Eternal Religion*; *The White Man's Bible*, *Salubrious Living*; and most recently, *Rahowa! The Planet is Ours*. The latter volume, published in 1989, is an acronym of RACIAL HOLY WAR, and spells out Klassen's dreams for bringing about, in COC parlance, "A whiter, brighter world." All of this is spelled out in some detail in the COC monthly newspaper, *Racial Loyalty*.

6. Single Issue Constituencies and Lone Unguided Missiles are rare in this milieu, given the prevalence of cross-memberships. Several examples are offered here, but the list is suggestive at best. It is possible that none of the individuals or causes listed here are in fact isolated from other adherents or causes. It is an important category to keep open however, given the current turn in the thinking of the violent fringes of the movement as reflected in Hoskins' *Vigilantes of Christendom* and Pierce's *Hunter*.<sup>74</sup>

The sorts of single issue constituencies which appeal to the white supremacist community may offer some surprises. Abortion for example, the most volatile of current single issue constituencies, does not seem to play a role in the white supremacist community, despite the nearly unanimous pro-life position reflected in the literature of the movement. Presumably, some adherents do participate in local pro-life activities, although the presence of the more well known racist leaders would probably be unwelcome by pro-life organizations.<sup>75</sup> Still, there seems little inclination in the movement to form a 'Klansmen for Life' chapter any time soon. More to the point are various economic appeals, for example Colorado's Arch Roberts and other Federal Reserve conspiracy theorists, some Posse Comitatus tax protestors, certain home schoolers, etc.<sup>76</sup> Holocaust revisionism is as well a major attraction to the single issue zealot.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> On the reasoning behind this change, see Louis Beam, "On Avoiding Conspiracy Charges and Other Related Matters" *The Seditonist* 10 (Summer 1991), pp. 5-7. For an endorsement of this tactical change, see Tom Metzger, "Editorial," *WAR* 2 (n.d.), p. 2.

<sup>75</sup> James A. Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness: Idaho Christian Patriotism*, pp. 20-21. A prominent exception would be Ralph Forbes, an Arkansas Identity preacher who maintains a strong loyalty to the late George Lincoln Rockwell of the American Nazi Party, in which he was an officer. He was arrested in anti-abortion protests in Wichita in 1991. See the form letter mailed under the letterhead of Forbes' The New America First Committee, dated 6 February 1992. On Forbes' own colorful biography, see ADL, *Extremism on the Right: A Handbook*, pp. 91-93. More common however, was condemnation of the Wichita confrontation due primarily to simple despair that the course of the nation could be effectively altered, thus making a clash with the civil authorities of questionable biblical authority, and of no pragmatic political effect. Conversation with Dan Gayman, 14 October 1991.

<sup>76</sup> Archibald Roberts, *Emerging Struggle for State Sovereignty* (Ft. Collins, Co.: Betsy Ross, 1979). Cf. James A. Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness: Idaho Christian*

Even rarer than single issue zealots are lone wolves, or unguided missiles. Lone wolves currently may be found in the nether reaches of survivalism,<sup>78</sup> in the occasional crackpot with a home computer and enough money for postage whose ravings or threats are mailed to an unwilling audience, and in the lone gunman who on his own decides to strike a blow for the cause by a random murder. No more egregious such case can be posited than that of the Goldmark family, murdered on Christmas Eve, 1985, by a deranged gunman who mistakenly believed the couple to be Jewish.<sup>79</sup>

A more ambiguous case of the unguided missile may be that of Richard Snell, currently on death row in Texarcana, Texas for the murder of a black Arkansas state trooper during a routine traffic stop. Previous to this murder, Snell was involved in a series of terrorist acts, culminating in the murder of the owner of a pawnshop during a robbery in Texarcana, Arkansas. The victim, William Stumpp, was believed by Snell to be Jewish, and thus he "needed to die."<sup>80</sup> The Snell case is offered here to illustrate the notorious difficulty of seeking to categorize so fluid a movement as the white supremacist

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*Patriotism*, pp. 20-21, 257. On the coalition around home schooling as viewed from an Identity perspective, see Guy F. Roberts, "Why Home Schooling?" *America's Promise Newsletter* (March 1992), pp. 10-15.

<sup>77</sup> Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, "Holocaust 'Revisionism,'" *ADL Research Report* (Summer 1989). "Hoping to Change Minds of Young on Holocaust," *New York Times*, 23 December 1991, p. 8. Cf. Dr. E. R. Fields, "Was There Really a Holocaust?" pamphlet published as Truth Tract #1 by the Georgia based newspaper, *The Truth at Last* (n.d.). On the fertile ground in which Holocaust revisionists hope to plant seeds of doubt, see "1 in 5 Polled Voices Doubt on Holocaust," *New York Times*, 20 April 1993, p. 10.

<sup>78</sup> Johnny France and Malcolm McConnell. *Incident at Big Sky* (New York: Norton, 1986). Cf. James Coates. *Armed and Dangerous: The Rise of the Survivalist Right*.

<sup>79</sup> James Aho, "Reification and Sacrifice: The Goldmark Case" *California Sociologist* 10 (Winter 1987). Cf. The Klanwatch Project, "Hate Violence and White Supremacy: A Decade Review 1980-1990," *The Klanwatch Project of the Southern Poverty Law Center* (December 1989), p. 33.

<sup>80</sup> Kevin Flynn and Gary Gerhardt, *The Silent Brotherhood*, pp. 260-261.

constellation.<sup>81</sup> Was Snell, according to the classification suggested here, acting as a part of Christian Identity whose doctrines he fervently embraces? Or would he be more comfortably ensconced in the Idiosyncratic Sectarian camp, given his fealty to Jim Ellison and the Covenant, Sword and the Arm of the Lord? Or, as suggested here, is he most properly styled an Unguided Missile, given that the murders of which he has been convicted were undertaken at his own initiative in the mistaken belief that they would meet the approval of his colleagues? It is a difficult task, but one that must be undertaken, lest such non-violent institutions as the Church of Israel and most other Identity adherents throughout the world be unjustly tarred with the murderous actions of a minority of the movement.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> The efforts of even the most meticulous of scholars can go awry in seeking to draw distinctions of this kind. See for example the excellent James A. Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness: Idaho's Christian Patriotism*, p. 19, in which an attempt is made to differentiate between racist and non-racist Identity. Under Racist Identity, Prof. Aho lists the Mountain Church of Robert Miles (racist, but Dualist rather than Identity), the White American Resistance (WAR) and the White Student Union. (Both WAR and the WSU were the creation of Tom Metzger and his son. The senior Metzger was once an Identity preacher, but had left Identity in favor of Klan and neo-Nazi doctrines, while his son has apparently never been affiliated with Identity). See Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, *Extremism on the Right: A Handbook*, pp. 64, 128-129. Under Non-racist identity, Prof. Aho lists such avowedly racist appeals as Dan Gayman's Church of Israel and Pete Peters' Scriptures for America (both considered at length throughout this chapter). The key point here is not that a Non-racist Identity is an oxymoron. Several attempts to wean Identity from racism, still nascent at this writing, were considered above. Rather, the important point would appear to be to determine how particular Identity leaders will seek to actuate their ideas, whatever these may be. Thus the choice of withdrawal vs. revolutionary activism to differentiate Identity appeals would appear a more practical schema.

<sup>82</sup> For Snell, the fight goes on through his prison Identity ministry, the Last Call Ministries, and its publication, *The Seekers*. *The Seekers* is most notable for Richard Snell's rambling and disjointed style, made appealing by a sincere humility in confronting the complexities of biblical exegesis. It is distributed by his tireless wife, Mary Snell, whose current efforts involves Snell's latest appeal. See the form letter sent by Mary Snell to all supporters of the Last Call, dated 25 January 1992. Cf. Richard Snell's own Death Row meditation; Richard Wayne Snell, *The Shadow of death! (Is There Life After Death?)* (self published and privately distributed, c. 1986).



7. Hope Seeking a Means to Fulfillment refers to the most enthusiastic audience for the appeals of the various components of the white supremacist constellation. These include in particular racist skinhead groups and the denizens of American prisons. The racist skinhead groups, so named for their preferred hair style, are a surprisingly diverse movement.<sup>83</sup> Modelled on the mid-1970s British youth movement of the same name, the linking factors (besides hair style) of both the British and American versions are: clothes, particularly heavy, steel-toed boots, and music, a version of three-chord British punk known in England as 'Oy!' and in America variously as punk or thrash. Many British skins are tied to the quazi-fascist and anti-immigrant National Front. American skins too are the target of considerable recruitment efforts from across the white supremacist constellation. Identity figure Richard Butler, Tom Metzger a former Identity preacher who has both a Klan and neo-Nazi background, William Pierce's neo-Nazi National Alliance, and many others have had connections in some form with various skinhead groups.<sup>84</sup> The attraction is obvious, a group of young street toughs willing to fight battles as directed by leaders who themselves keep a safe distance from the fray. It is a tactic which is becoming increasingly tenuous in the aftermath of the recent civil judgement finding Metzger responsible for the murder of a black Ethiopian immigrant of which he himself had no direct knowledge.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> There are anti-racist skinheads and apolitical skins as well, although these garner little press attention.

<sup>84</sup> Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, "Shaved for Battle" *ADL Special Report* (1987), p. 4 covers the basic facts. James Ridgeway, *Blood In The Face*, pp. 157-176 gives much more detailed coverage, especially as relates to Metzger. For the National Alliance's views of skinheads, see for example, "The Defender: 'Pluralist' Answer to the Turner Diaries," *National Vanguard* 111 (June-July 1990). On skinhead music, see "The Pervasive Sound of Hatred," *Klanwatch Intelligence Report* 54 (February 1991).

<sup>85</sup> *Klanwatch Intelligence Report* 54 (February 1991), p. 2. CF. Bill Moyers, *Hate on Trial*. PBS Documentary, Broadcast 5 February 1992; and "Supremacist Gets Jail In Cross-Burning Case," *New York Times*, 4 December 1991, p. 13. Metzger was recently released from jail to attend his wife, critically ill from lung cancer. "White Racist is Freed Because His Wife is Ill," *New York Times*, 23 February 1992, p. 13. Metzger remained free following the 4 March 1992 death of Kathleen, his wife of 28 years, and has recently

To drive home this point, Bill Moyers presented on the Public Broadcasting Service a documentary consisting primarily of trial footage in the civil suit brought against Metzger, his son and his organization. The driving force behind the suit was Morris Dees of the Southern Poverty Law Center on behalf of the victim's son (then still in Ethiopia, since resettled in California). The key to the success of this prosecution was the testimony of one Dave Mizella, acting at the time of the murder as an agent of Metzger and his organization among skinheads in the greater northwest. The plaintiffs asked for an award of \$10m (they ultimately received \$12.5m) in an action to, quoting Dees: "Build a fence \$10m high" to keep Metzger out of Oregon. Tom Metzger and his son acted in their own defense, contending that "skins can't be organized." They in fact did more to lose the case than plaintiffs did to win it.<sup>86</sup>

The interconnections between skinheads and racist leaders was graphically demonstrated when Dees played a videotape of Metzger in Tequila, Oklahoma talking to a group of skins and suggesting that they "kick a little ass." Dees then played a tape of Metzger's telephone bulletin board which justified the killings after the fact, claiming that these "beautiful Blacks" (the victims) were "high on crack" and that the killers were doing "a civic duty" in killing them. Another tape claimed that "One young fighter, Ken Mieske, received life" and that the victims should "get their Ethiopian ass (sic) out of this country." Metzger styled this "invasion from the Third World" illegal, no matter what the government calls legal. The success of the action, closing down Metzger's operation, as well as making him effectively homeless and garnishing 40% of any future moneys he may

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begun to publish his newspaper, *WAR*, once again. A Chicago attorney, Michael Null, has filed an appeal of the Portland civil judgement, while the Los Angeles criminal case regarding the cross burning is also under appeal. See "Metzger Free As Wife Succumbs," *The Balance* 3 (March 1992), p. 1. For Metzger's own eulogy to his wife, see Tom Metzger, "Editorial," *WAR* 2 (n.d.), p. 2.

<sup>86</sup> Bill Moyers, *Hate on Trial*. PBS Documentary, Broadcast 5 February 1992.

manage to earn, may indeed serve to discourage the direct recruiting of skinheads to undertake acts of violence.<sup>87</sup>

The prison population, as noted above, too has been a primary recipient of appeals from across the white supremacist spectrum.<sup>88</sup> These appeals may come from leaders such as Robert Miles (*Beyond the Bars...the Stars!!*) and Richard Butler (*The Way*). They may come as well in response to requests from prisoners themselves, such as the V.I.S.I.T. [Visiting Incarcerated Saints in Tribulation] program sponsored by pastor Paul Hall in Midpines, California.<sup>89</sup> They also may come in response to requests from prisoners themselves. Identity leaders preaching a message of non-violence or submission to civil authorities too report a considerable prison constituency.<sup>90</sup> Odinists also have a significant prison ministry.<sup>91</sup> Increasingly, there is evidence of considerable competition

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> It should be noted too that religious appeals of every description have been aimed at prisoners from time immemorial. This is in keeping with the admonition of 1 Peter 3:19 to preach to the spirits in the prisons.

<sup>89</sup> Pastor Hall's ministry includes personal visits to prisoners, correspondence, and occasional assistance in the form of financial aid and services. In addition to V.I.S.I.T., pastor Hall includes a column of prison letters as a regular feature of his *Jubilee* newspaper. A good insight into the attraction of such a ministry is indicated by a letter to the editor in a recent issue of *Jubilee* in which "Darlene" writes that she has become engaged to marry a prisoner she met through the *Jubilee* prison ministry. See "Publisher's Post," *Jubilee* 4, March/April 1992, p. 15.

<sup>90</sup> For example, interview with Dan Gayman, 9-11 December 1991; letter to acquaintance of author (name withheld) from Raymond Bray of The Lord's Work, Inc., 9 December 1991. These are but a few of the many appeals which are directed to White prisoners.

<sup>91</sup> The flavor of this ministry can be glimpsed in a letter dated 11 January 1992 to an Odinist 'ministry', from a California prisoner. In brief, this inmate states that he is tired of "playing prison political organizations," and as a result, "SKINHEADS (emph. in original) want my head." SKINHEADS in this California prison were told by Aryan Brothers to "stab cops and other inmates," but he refused. The Aryan Brothers are "full of drug addicts and common criminals, with no concern for the White race. Aryan Brothers even have Mexicans and Indians among their number." He then goes on to ask several questions regarding Odinist belief, emphasizing the strong similarities between certain Odinist tenets and the Christian doctrines of Armageddon and the Trinity. Telephone conversation, 17 January 1992.

for the allegiance of white prisoners between Identity and Odinist factions. Consider for example, the following samples, the one from a disgruntled Identity adherent, the other from a skinhead desiring to know more about Odinism:

Rev. Butler,

I'm writing in response to your letter in which I'm called a Jew, parasite, garbage, punk, liar, dope addict and a number of other things...Aryan to me means WHITE. How can you show such niggerish disrespect and call yourselves Christians? I had a book on Christian Identity. After your fantastic letter, which I wouldn't use for toilet paper, I've thrown this book in the trash. I ask for help in improving myself, and this is the answer I get? I believe I'll stick to odinism [sic]. They are really white, and they have respect for their people...-M.<sup>92</sup>

You asked what I'm in for. Well I tried to force a baseball bat down a Jews [sic] face. I got 3 years for it. Then when I was in Folsom I stabbed a Rat so I've got to do the whole 3. I've got 10 months left...I've got to finish my time here in the hole too...

Have you met any Skins before?...

I am right now ... the inventor of a little plan to try and bring the Skins who are into that Jew worshipping Christian crap out of it...I feel a person who calls himself a Christian & then claims white Power is a very confused person... Christianity has already put our race... in a gutter...

Personally, I think Tom Metzger and Richard Butler and the rest of the figureheads are truly in the movement to suck money out of their people.<sup>93</sup>

Of course, appeals directed from the outside to prisoners are hardly the invention of the 'white supremacist constellation'.<sup>94</sup> Prison ministries, conducted both by incarcerated activists and by outsiders, have been of some importance in the creation and development

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<sup>92</sup> "Letters," *The Way* (June 1987), p. 6.

<sup>93</sup> Letter from a prisoner in California to a prominent Odinist leader, n.d.. names withheld by request. The letter continues with a number of specific questions regarding the tenets of Odinism.

<sup>94</sup> Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, "Extremism Targets the Prisons," *ADL Special Report* (June 1986).

of oppositional movements of many religio-political stripes. But even a cursory examination of cases from around the world points to a predominant pattern: while outside assistance may be invaluable in providing support, materials, publicity and legal aid to incarcerated activists, it is the prisoners themselves who control the movement. 'Outside agitators' may help to roil troubled waters, but it is the conditions of the prison world itself, and of the activists' ability to shape those conditions to advantage, which is the key to the success or failure of such prison based movements.

The classic paradigm in which a religio-political movement was formed through the prison experience into a powerful mobilization tool is provided by the case of Egypt. In the early 1960s, Sayyid Qutb, the premier ideologist of the Muslim Brotherhood, was arrested on charges of conspiring against the life of President Nasser. Qutb, incarcerated with the core leadership of the *Ikkwan* [Brothers], managed until his execution in 1965 to turn his prison into an intensive seminar on the revival of a militant, oppositional Islam which created in the first instance a resurgence of radicalized *Ikkwan* cadre.<sup>95</sup> Of more lasting importance however, from this prison experience came a new generation of Islamist activists, far more radical than anything envisioned by Qutb, who came collectively to form the *takfir*<sup>96</sup> movement; a cluster of autonomous, largely clan-based combatant organizations which, under a variety of operational names, utilize violent tactics to achieve their aims.<sup>97</sup> These groups came to international attention when, on 6 October 1981, one

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<sup>95</sup> The primary text on the Muslim Brotherhood remains Richard Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969).

<sup>96</sup> *Takfir* is a difficult term to translate precisely. In the present context, it has been rendered by various authorities as 'excommunicate,' 'repent,' or even as 'heresy.'

<sup>97</sup> Abdel Azim Ramadan, "Fundamentalist Influence in Egypt: the Strategy of the Muslim Brotherhood and the Takfir Groups," in Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, *Fundamentalisms and the State: Remaking Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); Saad Eddin Ibrahim, "Anatomy of Egypt's Militant Islamic Groups: Methodological Note and Preliminary Findings," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 12 (1980), pp. 423-453; and Maurice Martin and Rose Marie Massad, " 'Al-Takfir Wal-Hijrah' A Study in Sectarianism," *Ceman Reports* 5 (1977), pp. 135-162.

of their number, the *Jihad* organization of 'Abd al-Salam Faraj, managed to assassinate the Egyptian president Anwar al-Sadat.<sup>98</sup>

Whether the current 'prison ministries' serving the members of the 'white supremacist constellation' could ever approach the effectiveness of the Egyptian model is impossible to predict at the present time. Clearly, it is just such a fear that underlies the Anti-Defamation League's warning on the subject. However, it must be born in mind that the Egyptian model is not precisely analogous to the incarcerated white supremacists in the U. S. Of key importance in this respect is the fact that Islam in Egypt incorporates the primary basis of identity for the adherent. It is at once a religious creed, a national history, a clan lineage, and the source of social mores, or in a word, a full fledged *zeitgeist*. Further, it is a way of life which is seen as under unremitting attack--by the state, by the West which is seen as the 'hidden hand' behind the state, and ultimately, by Satan himself, the real force behind the attack on God's people.<sup>99</sup> The adherent of Christian Identity, or of Odinism, does not carry so deep an identification with his religion. Almost all Identity Christians, and all Odinists, are converts. And despite the natural zeal of the convert, they are clearly aware of the minority status of the belief system, and of its occupational and political disutility beyond the walls of the prison where the sect could at least provide companionship and protection.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> An excellent introduction to the events surrounding the assassination is Mohamed Heikal, *Autumn of Fury* (New York: Random House, 1983). Cf. Saad Eddin Ibrahim, "The Islamic Alternative in Egypt: The Muslim Brotherhood and Sadat," *Arab Studies Quarterly* 4 (1982), pp. 75-93.

<sup>99</sup> The best contemporary picture of this manichaeian view, albeit from an Shi'i perspective, is Amir Taheri, *The Spirit of Allah* (Bethesda, Md.: Adler & Adler, 1986). For the historic development of this view, Ira M. Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

<sup>100</sup> Another possible future for these racist prison appeals, unlikely for the present, is that prison authorities will embrace the most accommodationist of these ministries as a foil against more radical appeals. Such a scenario appears to be underway in the New York prison system with respect to members of the Nation of Islam (Black Muslims). Francis X. Clines, "Prison Has the Body, but Allah Has the Mind," *New York Times*, 2 July 1992, p. 1.

The seven camps within the white supremacist constellation-- (1) Klan organizations, (2) Identity groups, (3) neo-Nazi organizations, (4) Reconstructed Traditions, (5) Idiosyncratic Sectarians, (6) Single Issue Constituencies and Lone Unguided Missiles, and (7) Hope Seeking a Means to Fulfillment-- all exhibit certain common points of ideology. These will be the focus of the following section.

### III. Ideological Formation

Prof. Barkun suggests five primary elements which compose the ideological basis of the white supremacist movement today: Identity theology, racial superiority, Jewish conspiracy, Nazism as the preferred vehicle for securing racial purity, and a millenarian view of history.<sup>101</sup> Since it is evident from the discussion in Section II that the adoption of a considerably wider model of the white supremacist community is both a valid and useful analytical approach, Prof. Barkun's group of ideological variables would appear to need some revision. In particular, it is necessary to reconsider the applicability of Nazism as a desirable political system, especially when applied to Christian Identity groups whose chiliastic dreams tend to center on the perfected reign of Christ rather than on a return of the fuehrer. An Identity appeal to Jesus in jackboots would probably strike most of the faithful as incongruous, if not blasphemous.<sup>102</sup> Identity theology as a variable too would seem to be overly restrictive, ruling out the Reconstructed Traditions which may have much in

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<sup>101</sup> Michael Barkun, "Millenarian Aspects of 'White Supremacist' Movements," pp. 417-418.

<sup>102</sup> Richard Butler of the Aryan Nations in Idaho, with his penchant for dressing bodyguards in SS-style uniforms and in his adoption of a swastika-like cross as his symbol, may be an exception to this rule.

common with Identity, but which de-emphasize the identification of biblical Israel with the Caucasian race in favor of alternative interpretations.

An alternative group of ideological variables which all sectors of the white supremacist constellation could be said to share, at least to some degree, would have to include: (1) a Golden Age Myth; (2) the perception of a 'Theft of Culture'; (3) scripturalism; (4) a manichaeian world view; (5) a conspiratorial view of history; (6) an unyielding self image of the adherent as a member of a much persecuted elect or 'Righteous Remnant'; and (7) a millenarian view which centers either on the imminence of apocalypse or on some form of chiliasm. These ideological factors often spur the believer toward political and social action, and although these can not be predicted with absolute certainty, it is important to note that actions undertaken by elements of the white supremacist constellation which appear to the outside observer as hopelessly naïve (if not lunatic) are the result of a certain strain of logic common to millennialist movements throughout their long history. In the interests of space, only the Klan groups, Identity, neo-Nazi groups and the Reconstructed Traditions will be analyzed fully in terms of each variable. The single issue constituencies and lone unguided missiles, the idiosyncratic sectarians and the inchoate Hope Seeking a Means to Fulfillment all tend to subscribe to these variables to some degree, but their interpretations tend to be too individualistic for concise examination in this forum.

1. A myth of a golden age of peace and plenty is a common thread in nearly every religious belief system. It may be for a Sunni Islamist thinker the Meccan period of Islamic history (7th c. C.E.) under the rule of the Prophet or the Rightly Guided Caliphs.<sup>103</sup> Or for a certain strain of Christian thought, it may be the primitive Church of the Roman

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<sup>103</sup> Ira M. Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies* ; and Marshall C. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, 3 volumes, (Chicago:University of Chicago Press, 1974).



Catacombs, or perhaps the America of Puritan Pietism. Whatever the period chosen by a given set of adherents, there appear to be certain features of this persistent longing for a lost world of innocence and purity. First, this vision appears to present a picture of a community in every sense of the word, with cooperation and mutual support for every individual in a group marked by its lack of diversity or dissent. The lives of each member of the community are lived according to a divine, or at least primordial archetype which has sadly decayed until, in the present day, we can but imagine glimmerings of this period of former glory. Yet this imagination of the golden age remains sufficiently strong that its evocation can still arouse passion, and perhaps action, among certain individuals. The white supremacist constellation does not lack for such visions.

The Klan groups, divided as they are, offer competing visions, but what is most striking to the outsider is that the seductiveness of the message appears to be the inverse of its degree of specificity. For example, while a Louis Beam can wax rhapsodic over the Klan's own past,<sup>104</sup> a Thomas Robb can draw a glowing portrait of a day in America's early history which in his evocation would appear Edenic. When pressed as to specifics, whether the reference is to colonial America, the threads of the golden dream tend to unravel:

There's all kinds of things we could look at, but I'm perhaps not knowledgeable enough to speak at any length about it, but you know we could go all the way back to returning America to--well, it wouldn't be so much returning like a force type of thing, it's allowing people the freedoms that they had. And if you allow the people the freedoms that they had they would return to any of these things on their own...<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> See his brief ode to the First Era Klansman in Louis Beam, "A Klansman's Guide to the Fifth Era," *Inter-Klan Newsletter & Survival Alert* 4 (c. 1984), p. 9. For a more general sacrilization of revolutionary America, see in the same issue, "On Revolutionary Majorities," pp. 1-7.

<sup>105</sup> Author's interview with Thom Robb in Chicago, 24 August 1991. Dreamy evocations of America's past glories, often exaggerated or imaginary, are common to the golden age fantasies throughout the White supremacist constellation. Dan Gayman offers such a vision in metaphorical language in "America Speaks to Her People," *Zions Watchman* 1

Identity being a diverse theology, it is no surprise that various preachers fix the golden past in various times and places. All of course agree on the time of Adamic creation, before the Fall, and for many, before the demonic creation of the present day 'Synagogue of Satan', the false Jews.<sup>106</sup> Others point to the era before the Babylonian exile, and the demonization of Israel through the evil of Babylonian Talmudism.<sup>107</sup> The range of choices available is almost unlimited, and Identity quarters have delved deep into a largely imagined history to reconstruct scenarios of past bliss. The neo-Nazi groups have a less formidable hermeneutical task to define a golden age, reaching only to Nazi Germany for its heroes and for its days of bliss for the elect.<sup>108</sup> Reconstructed Traditions offer a

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(January 1977), pp. 9-13. Great figures of America's past are prominent features of this effort, with the "vision" of George Washington or the remarks of Abraham Lincoln often serving as the basis for such constructions. See for example, Washington's vision in such diverse contexts as "George Washington's Vision," *Aryan Nations Newsletter* 7 (c. 1978), pp. 1, 7 (Lincoln too is quoted here); Jack Mohr, "George Washington's Vision and Prophecy for the United States of America," flier lacking date or publication data; and author's conversation with John Harrell of the Christian Patriot's Defense League of Flora, Illinois, 9 November 1991.

<sup>106</sup> For a good selection of these diverse ideas, see the work of Eldon D. Purvis in the newsletter *New Beginnings* 4 (April 1982) and *New Beginnings* 1 (January 1989); Dan Gayman, "Jewish Fables Capture American Pulpits," *Zions Watchman* 8 (July 1977); and Kenneth Goff, "Satanism the Father of Communism," *The Pilgrim Torch* (June 1962), pp. 3-5.

<sup>107</sup> This theme is ubiquitous in the literature. For a sampling, see Gordon Winrod, "Killing the Jews," *The Winrod Letter* 212 (September 1982). Cf. Len Martin, *Why They Wanted to Get Gordon Kahl*; and for the view in its most primitive form, see the undated and untitled newsletter of the White Angel Isaac Sons Ministry of Lincolnton, North Carolina. This issue includes an article along the same lines by the "Southern Headquarters" of the Posse Comitatus in Nufreesboro, Tennessee entitled, "WHO Brought the Slaves to America?"

<sup>108</sup> For the work of a contemporary of Hitler, see Gerald B. Winrod, *Hitler in Prophecy* (Wichita, Ks: Defender Publishers, 1933). The most evocative modern formulation of this view is in the fictional *Turner Diaries* by neo-Nazi William Pierce. Pierce's National Vanguard Books in Hillsboro, West Virginia offers numerous titles centering on other idealized pasts ranging from Viking ships to various facets of European culture and history. The Appalachian Forum book sellers of Pittsburgh supply to this market as well. Bibliophile Legion Books of Silver Spring, Maryland offers Nazi memorabilia, Hitler reproductions and numerous books on various aspects of the Third Reich.

golden age myth appropriate to the group's choice of a tradition deemed worthy of reconstructing. The Odinists obviously focus on the life of the Long Halls and sailing ships of the Norse era (c. 11th-12th c.),<sup>109</sup> while Robert Miles' Dualist appeal alternately focused on the France of the pre-Albigensian crusade (before c. 1250 C.E.) and on the Giants of the Enoch literature.<sup>110</sup>

In all cases, the vision of a lost golden age brings the seeker to undertake to discover precisely how and why that great time was lost. And it is as a result of this search for lost glory that adherents all too often begin the journey from dreams of past glories to an active effort to reclaim at least the shadow if not the full substance of the birthright which they see as rightfully theirs. For who could believe that the the golden age was lost through the fault of the elect? Rather, the theft must be laid at the door of a malign, envious OTHER.

2. The theft of culture theme is as old as the myth of Prometheus who for the benefit of suffering mortals stole fire from the gods. But here, far from being the beneficiary of a theft, the white supremacist constellation see themselves as the victim of a theft of culture-- a culture which many in this milieu see themselves as exclusively fit to bare.<sup>111</sup> Klan

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<sup>109</sup> "The Wisdom From the Edda." Cf. *Thor: Hammer of the Gods* 3 (c. 1977).

<sup>110</sup> The best source for pastor Miles' Cathar beliefs is the combined issue of *From the Mountain* and *Beyond the Bars...the Stars!* (January-February 1986). In this issue, pastor Miles takes the liberty of reprinting Eric Wynants, "The Church's Attack on the Cathars," *Critique* 19/20 (Fall/Winter 1986), along with a running commentary by the pastor in his favorite *alter ego*, Fafnir (the mythological Norse dragon slain by Sigurd). On the giants and the full imagined history of the Golden Age, see *From the Mountain* (March-April 1985), pp. 1-7.

<sup>111</sup> The white man as the sole culture bearer is a common belief in the white supremacist constellation. See for example, the identification of the non-White races with the "beasts of the field" in Genesis: Sheldon Emry, "The Seven Sins of Canaan," transcript of 1970 sermon published from the Lord's Covenant Church (Phoenix, Az.: 1986), p. 9: "Most of you know, from the Bible (as our great, great grandfathers knew), that the negro [sic] is the beast of the field and not a son of Adam nor a part of Israel." The same p[oint] was made in the author's interview with Thom Robb, 24 August 1991. The white man as sole

groups in general tend to posit this theft in relatively contemporary, nativist American terms. The culture has been in this view gradually wrested from white Americans by the combined impact of race mixing, immigration of non-white foreigners, a corrupt government and of course, the malign Jew at the root of it all.<sup>112</sup>

Identity Christianity takes its very name from its professed realization of the most grandiose theft of culture in recorded history, the theft of the birthright of the ten tribes of Israel by those 'false Jews' who form the Synagogue of Satan. In its original guise of Anglo-Israelism, it was enough for adherents to perform the difficult work of biblical hermeneutics necessary to successfully identify the Caucasian nations of Europe with the ten lost tribes of Israel. It was in the 19th century unnecessary to demonize the Jews as usurpers,<sup>113</sup> and indeed, Anglo-Israelites were on the whole substantial citizens whose numbers included parliamentarians, businessmen, military officers and bankers, and these

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culture bearer is a central tenet of the Church of Israel, and will be considered at greater length below.

<sup>112</sup> Interview with Thom Robb, 24 August 1991. Cf. John C. Calhoun & Louis Beam, "The Perfected Order of the Klan," *Inter-Klan Newsletter & Survival Alert* 5 (c. 1984), pp. 1-5. Less enthusiastic views may be found in Jerry Thompson, *My Life in the Klan* (Nashville, TN: Rutledge Hills Press, 1982, 1988); Wyn Craig Wade, *The Fiery Cross* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987); and Richard K. Tucker, *The Dragon and the Cross: The Rise and Fall of the Ku Klux Klan in Middle America* (Hamden, CT.: Archon Books, 1991).

<sup>113</sup> See for example, several of the most influential of these texts: Edward Hine, *Forty-Seven Identifications of the Anglo-Saxons With the Ten lost Tribes of Israel. Founded Upon Five Hundred Scripture Proofs* (London: n.d. [c. 1875]); J. H. Allen, *Judah's Scepter and Joseph's Birthright* (Merrimac, MA.: Destiny Publishers, 1902); John Wilson, *Our Israelite Origin* (Philadelphia: Daniels & Smith, 1850); John Wilson, *The Title Deeds of the Holy Land* (London: James Nisbet and Co., n.d.); Ethan Smith, *View of the Hebrews* (Poultney, VT.: Smith & Shute, 1823); Ethan Smith, *View of the Hebrews*, 2nd ed. (Poultney, VT.: Smith & Shute, 1828); and W. H. Poole, *Anglo-Israel or the Saxon Race Proved to be the Lost Ten Tribes of Israel* (Toronto: n.d.). For the best, if tedious, biblical refutation of Anglo-Israel theory, see Allen H. Godbey, *The Lost Tribes A Myth* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1930). The inspiration for early Anglo-Israelism was Richard Brothers, *A Revealed Knowledge of the Prophecies and Times...Containing with Other Great and Remarkable Things, Not Revealed to Any Other Person on Earth, The Restoration of the Hebrews to Jerusalem, by the Year 1798, Under Their Revealed Prophet. Two Parts in One Volume* (London, 1794).

were in general in sympathy with the Zionist enterprise.<sup>114</sup> This would change in the America of the 1920s which gave birth to Identity Christianity as we know it today. Identity came increasingly to identify the Jew as a servant if not in fact the literal offspring of Satan, and as the 'human' instrument for the diabolic theft of culture which Identity adherents strive to this day to rectify.<sup>115</sup>

While neo-Nazi groups still question the results of the Second World War and the reality of the Holocaust in a manner very much in keeping with the theft of culture motif,<sup>116</sup> the Reconstructed Traditions apply a much more interesting hermeneutical approach. The Odinists see the spread of Christianity as the agent of the destruction of the tradition, with the Norse gods gradually absorbed into the cosmology of Christianity.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> J. F. C. Harrison, *The Second Coming: Popular Millenarianism 1780-1850*, ch. 4; and Ruth Mouly, *The Religious Right and Israel: The Politics of Armageddon*, self-published monograph (n.d.), pp. 15-18. Identity in America at this writing enjoys few such high status adherents. A prominent exception is the recent convert Roger Rusk, brother of former U. S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk. See "The Jubilee Interviews Roger Rusk," *Jubilee* 4, March/April 1992, p. 14.

<sup>115</sup> How this change in Identity came about is still far from clear. Perhaps the best theory to date is that of J. Gordon Melton, who traces a line of transmission from Richard Brothers (mid 18th c.) to John Wilson (mid 19th c.), and then across the Atlantic to America and Canada with works by M. M. Eshelman, W.H. Poole and J. H. Allen, all late 19th to early 20th century figures. From Allen, the Church of God, Seventh Day took its doctrine, as did Herbert W. Armstrong. By 1930 however, under the impact of the *Dearborn Independent's* anti-Semitic series and of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, a new Identity with a new passion for identifying and punishing the Jews for their theft of the birthright emerged, spearheaded by Howard Rand and C.S. Warner. J. Gordon Melton, *Encyclopedic Handbook of Cults in America* (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1986), pp. 53-61. Micheal Barkun is currently peacing together this convoluted history, attempting to trace the transformation of Anglo-Israelism into modern Identity Christianity. For an interim report, see Michael Barkun, "From British Israelism to Christian Identity: The Evolution of White Supremacist Religious Doctrine," *Syzygy* 1:1 (Winter 1992).

<sup>116</sup> All of these themes are gathered neatly through a 'catalogue' of available Holocaust revision materials in Bradley R. Smith, "Holocaust Revision Materials," self-published pamphlet (June 1991). On WWII revisionism, consult any or all issues of the newspaper *Attack!*, precursor to the slick *National Vanguard*, or the current National Vanguard Book catalogue. Cf. Gerhard Lauck's newspaper, *New Order*.

<sup>117</sup> Ederd Thorsson, "The Love of the Troth," *Idunna* 1:2 (1988), pp. 1-4.

In its most extreme formulations in other reconstructed traditions, Christianity itself is posited as Jewish, and seen as an agent for the destruction of the Aryan race, or indeed, of any racial culture.<sup>118</sup> Perhaps the most creative formulation of the theft of culture myth is offered by Robert Miles' Dualism:

First of all, Jesus was not a Jew. He was a Galilean. Jesus came out of the North! Not out of the desert lands. Understand that the population of Galilee, during the time of Jesus, was composed of relocated northern Folk tribes. Our folk!...Historians of a subsequent age attempted to give Jesus lineage socially acceptable to the masses, to fulfill prophecy...This attempt to make history support a certain status, rewriting history as it were, is not new. It has been going on since man began.<sup>119</sup>

3. Visions of a Golden Age, now lost due to a theft of culture, can not be invented from whole cloth. They must be based on a legitimating textual source, and thus scripturalism is an important component of the ideological appeal of white supremacist movements.

Christian Identity obviously stands or falls as a belief system on the foundation of an inerrant Bible, while some Identity groups would add the intertestamental texts as well.<sup>120</sup> The reconstructed traditions too base themselves on text, with Dualism looking to the same

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<sup>118</sup> See Margot Adler, *Drawing Down the Moon*, p. 571, n. 47, quoting the Odinist journal *Quarterstaff* for a mild formulation of this view. For a view of the interplay between these belief systems, see the article in the neo-Nazi *National Vanguard* by Jim DeWitt, "The History and Significance of the Life Rune," *National Vanguard* 105 (May-June 1985), pp. 5-8. Cf. the Odinist art and articles in Richard Butler's prison outreach, *The Way*, as well as letters from Odinist prisoners in both *The Way* and *Beyond the Bars...The Stars!*

<sup>119</sup> Robert Miles, *From the Mountain* (March-April 1985), p. 4.

<sup>120</sup> For the most comprehensive view of the evolution of modern Identity theology from the 1930s to date, consult the catalogue of Howard Rand's Destiny Publishers of Merrimac, Massachusetts.

sources as Identity adherents, and the Odinists basing themselves on the Eddas, although the latter do not tend to emphasize inerrancy.<sup>121</sup>

Klan and neo-Nazi groups are not as overtly tied to scriptural sources of authority. The Klan emphasizes Christianity as a prime component of identity, indeed, many Klan groups take 'Christian' as part of their organizational identity,<sup>122</sup> but only a few Klan leaders emphasize the religious appeal as on a par with race.<sup>123</sup> Given the centrality of the concept of Christianity to the Klansman's self-image however, it would be an error to dismiss an attachment to Biblical text as an unimportant facet of Klan ideology. The neo-Nazi groups present an even greater enigma. A cursory examination of the public organs of these groups such as the *National Vanguard*, the *Euro-American Quarterly* or *The Talon*, does not reveal a group of sectarians thumbing the well worn pages of *Mein Kampf* in search of daily guidance.<sup>124</sup> That the internal workings of the movement may not be as secular as the public appeals of the groups would have it appear may be indicated by the *Turner Diaries*, where an inerrant, secret text (*Mein Kampf*?) is presented to senior members of the revolutionary Order,<sup>125</sup> with secrecy posited as necessary because:

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<sup>121</sup> The available texts are considered too much corrupted, particularly by the machinations of the churchmen whose literacy preserved at least a portion of this heritage, as well as by the depredations of modern scholarship. Letters from Ron Hand, Odinist Study Group, 5 November 1991 and 29 December 1991.

<sup>122</sup> See the listing of group names in Michael Newton and Judy Ann Newton, *The Ku Klux Klan: An Encyclopedia* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1991), pp. 109-112. The Knights of the Ku Klux Klan in Metairie, Louisiana, David Duke's "youthful indiscretion," place Christianity as a requirement on their loyalty oath, although this is at the bottom of the page and follows allegiance to the Constitution of the United States and fealty to the White race. Jerry Thompson, *My Life in the Klan*, p. 18.

<sup>123</sup> Thom Arthur Robb, "The Negro Tool of the Anti-Christ," *Message of Old Monthly* 6 (n.d.).

<sup>124</sup> That there may exist such a text for recruitment into neo-Nazi groups, "Die Stimme Der Ahnen" by Heinrich Himmler, is suggested by Ron Hand, letter of 2 September 1991.

<sup>125</sup> Andrew Macdonald, *The Turner Diaries*, pp. 70-71 elaborates on this theme:

There has not been sufficient time to develop in all our people the essentially religious attitude toward our purpose and our doctrines...<sup>126</sup>

Scripturalism is of great importance for the pragmatic political orientation of the group, for having identified a Golden Age, and having mourned its loss, the question invariably arises, to paraphrase Lenin, of 'What To Do?' It is the answer to this question which distinguishes millenarian movements from other forms of religio-political activism: millenarian movements react in a totalistic fashion which largely discounts any conception of rational calculus vis á vis the prevailing balance of forces. Precisely what form the reaction will take, of course, depends primarily upon the interpretation of the guiding text, and this act of hermeneutics is itself conditioned by other components of the ideology prevalent in the white supremacist constellation. It must be noted here however, that contrary to the media coverage of the movement in the wake of the Order's activities, based

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I was led into a another basement room, a cubicle containing only a chair, and a small metal table...On the table was a black, plastic binder, perhaps two inches thick...The guard told me that I was to read everything in the binder very carefully...When I finished the last page some four hours later...It was as if I had just returned to earth--to the room--after a thousand year voyage through space.

What I had read--it amounted to a book of about 400 typed pages--had lifted me out of this world, out of my day-to-day existence as a fighter for the Organization, and it had taken me to the top of a high mountain from which I could see the whole world, with all its nations and tribes and races, spread out before me...

The book placed our present struggle...in a much larger context than I had ever considered before...I had never seen the whole picture so clearly...

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., p. 52. Cf. pp. 71-74:

We are truly the instruments of God in fulfillment of His Grand Design...As members of the Order we are to be bearers of the Faith...Today I was, in a sense, born again. I know now that I will never again be able to look at the world around me or my own life in quite the same way as I did before.



primarily on material fed to journalists by such organizations as the ADL and Klanwatch, the choice of action is by no means invariably violent.<sup>127</sup> For as the final section of this article centering on the Church of Israel demonstrates, biblical authority as easily can provide a mandate for submission to all but the most unjust forms of secular authority, as it can suggest a blueprint for violence.

Neither option, however, violence or withdrawal, appears to be possible in lieu of a mental framework which includes the closely related elements of manichaeism, a conspiratorial view of history, a sense of victimization as a persecuted member of the 'righteous remnant', and a chiliastic dream to cling to in times of tribulation.

4. A manichaean world view suffuses the documents emerging from every corner of the white supremacist constellation. Louis Beam's Klan appeal puts this dualistic view starkly:

We are at war...  
No, of course they won't leave me alone! Would you leave them alone if we were in power? Of course not! We would round up those guilty of heinous crimes like the mad dogs they are and execute the ones guilty, hang "um," deport them, or otherwise rid our nation of their miserable presence.<sup>128</sup>

Neo-Nazi groups are no less manichaean in outlook,<sup>129</sup> while Robert Miles in recognition of the powerful manichaeism at the heart of the white supremacist world view,

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<sup>127</sup> A prime example of this process is; "A Sinister Search for Identity," *Time*, 20 October 1986, p. 74. Here, the most extreme aspects of the movement, suitably exaggerated, are sourced to Leonard Zeskind of the Center for Democratic Renewal. Zeskind then replays the article in his own publication as evidence for the sinister nature of Christian Identity. See, Center for Democratic Renewal, *Aryan Nations Far-Right Underground Movement* (Atlanta, GA: Center for Democratic Renewal, n.d.). On the technique itself, see Richard H. Shultz and Roy Godson, *Dezinformatsia* (Washington, DC: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1984).

<sup>128</sup> Louis Beam, "We Are At War," *The Seditonist* 10 (Summer 1991), p. 1.

<sup>129</sup> William Pierce, "To My Fellow Thought Criminals:," *National Vanguard* 111 (June-July 1990), pp. 2-4.

actually goes so far as to base his reconstructed religion on past dualist sects. Only Odinism does not in itself contain the seeds of a manichaeian outlook although, with its substantial tendency towards cross membership, serial or simultaneous, such an outlook is hardly alien to its adherents..

Christian Identity groups feature a powerful manichaeian appeal. These range from the relatively restrained approach of a Howard Rand<sup>130</sup> to the extraordinary radicalism of William Fowler's Church of Jesus Christ Christian in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho:

We have two wars we are engaged in. One against the antichrist that rules the world; the other is an internal war within ourselves for the purification of our body and mind.<sup>131</sup>

5. A conspiratorial view of history appears to be the logical result of a pronounced manichaeian worldview.<sup>132</sup> Identity Christianity has a rich tradition of conspiratorial suspicions, with Jewish conspiracies the dominant motif. In this popular demonology of history, textual proofs are not hard to come by. The *Babylonian Talmud* as the most evil book ever written is discussed above. *The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion* provides an entry for many in the Identity camp to the identification of the Jew as the prime

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<sup>130</sup> See for example, Howard Rand, "The Antichrist Assembles Pagan and Religious Leaders to Pray for Peace," *Destiny Editorial Letter Service Special Alert No. 83* (November 1986). The Antichrist is identified as Pope Paul II [sic].

<sup>131</sup> "Seek the Inner Man," *End Time Revelation Newsletter* 2 (October 1976), p. 1. For a longer formulation of the same theme, see "Conspiracy to Destroy the Christian West," in the same issue, pp. 1-8. Pastor Fowler's formulation is virtually identical to the definition of *jihad* (struggle) offered by contemporary Sunni Islamist thinkers.

<sup>132</sup> A good recent study of conspiracy theories is George Johnson, *Architects of Fear* (Los Angeles: Jeremy P. Tarcher, 1983). A good picture of a conspiracy theory of American history in action is Anton Chaitkin, *Treason In America*, Second Edition (New York: New Benjamin Franklin House, 1985); or Eustace Mullins, *The Curse of Canaan: A Demonology of History* (Staunton, Va.: Revelation Books, 1987).

human mover in the timeless conspiracy against the people of God.<sup>133</sup> Other Identity figures, less impressed with the *Protocols*, found the *Dearborn Independent's* series, financed and publicized by Henry Ford, to be a more compelling case for the Jewish conspiracy theory of history.<sup>134</sup>

Whatever the entree into the Jewish conspiracy theory of history, the outlines of the conspiracy are clear enough: Jewish money as the motive force of history, a cabal of shadowy 'elite' Jews working tirelessly through Gentile frontmen to control every facet of the life of the world from religion, to the media, to the American government; and, since 1948, a capitol of this timeless subversion, the state of Israel, has been a central belief in

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<sup>133</sup> Jack Mohr, a relatively late convert to Identity, is a case in point. See his book length commentary on the *Protocols*: Jack Mohr, *The Satanic Counterfeit* (Muskagee, Ok.: Hoffman Printing Co., 1982). Although not remembered as an Identity figure, Gerald L. K. Smith brought under his wing such Identity figures as Wesley Swift, Kenneth Goff and others. Toward the end of his life, he appears to have come to embrace the Identity message:

True enough, the real Israel which came out of the seed of Abraham...were chosen of God for a special holy purpose (the salvation of mankind). But the people who say they are Jews and are not, and who are of the synagogue of Satan, and who perpetuate the crucifixion hate that flogged the flesh of the body of our Lord, and tortured him up Golgotha's Hill and nailed him to the cross have no relationship to the true Israel which grew out of the seed of Abraham and gave us the Son of God.

See his exegesis on the *Protocols*, Gerald L. K. Smith, *Satan's New Testament* (Los Angeles: Christian Nationalist Crusade, 1975), p. 25. On the probable origins of the *Protocols*, see Norman Cohn, *Warrant for Genocide* (New York: Harper, 1969).

<sup>134</sup> Interview with Dan Gayman, 9-11 December 1991. See *The Dearborn Independent, The International Jew: The World's Foremost Problem* (Dearborn, MI: The Dearborn Publishing Co., 1920). The full 4 volume set of *Dearborn Independent* reprints is currently available from National Vanguard Books. These volumes are: *The International Jew*; *Jewish Activities in the United States*; *Jewish Influences in American life*; and *Aspects of Jewish Power in the United States*. A condensed, single volume edition which carries no publication data is currently available at some book stores specializing in Afrocentric literature. From the same source, and by the similarity of the volumes from the same publishing house, an edition of the *Protocols* which includes a handful of essays from *The International Jew* can be obtained.

Identity circles.<sup>135</sup> Parallel to this view is an older, darker facet of the Jewish conspiracy which has attracted a relative handful of adherents from across the white supremacist constellation: the 'blood libel' of Jewish ritual murder.<sup>136</sup>

While the conspiratorial view of history is the most highly developed in Identity circles, it is hardly unique to Identity. The Klan groups,<sup>137</sup> the neo-Nazis,<sup>138</sup> and the

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<sup>135</sup> The essentials of this view were already set down in *The International Jew*. Newer elements, namely the success of the conspiracy in fully taking over the Protestant churches and the American government, can be viewed in the following texts: Kenneth Goff, *Traitors in the Pulpit* (Englewood, CO: Kenneth Goff, 1946); Jack Mohr, "Woe Unto Ye Fundamentalists," self published booklet, n.d.; Dan Gayman, "Jewish Fables Capture American Pulpits," *Zions Watchman* 8 (July 1977), pp. 1-4; Jack Mohr, "The Zionist World Order," self published booklet, n.d.; and on ZOG, the Zionist Occupation Government, see any issue of Richard Butler's Aryan Nations publications or Kevin Flynn and Gary Gerhardt, *The Silent Brotherhood*. For a wider view of the conspiracy, including such supporting characters as the perennial Illuminati, see Gerald B. Winrod, *Adam Weishaupt A Human Devil* (no publication data, c. 1935). Cf. any of the material emanating from Ellison's the Covenant, the Sword, and the Arm of the Lord.

<sup>136</sup> A number of sources reviving the Jewish ritual murder as a Talmudic rite have emerged in recent years. From Identity circles, James Warner of the New Christian Crusade Church has revived Arnold Leese's works through his mail order book list out of Metairie, La. He sets out for particular note Leese's *Jewish Ritual Murder*. See "New Christian Crusade Church Book List" (Fall/Winter 1991). Also from Christian Identity and Posse Comitatus circles is a mimeographed "Special Report" on Jewish ritual murder: "Jewish Murder Plan Against Gentile Humanity Exposed," undated flier distributed by Family Farm Preservation of Tigerton, Wisconsin (in reality the remnants of the Posse Comitatus). The Christian Education Association, Inc. of St. Petersburg, Florida recently issued an undated flier as a weekly report: "What Is Jewish Ritual Murder???" The CEA provides a connection which has become common among American believers in the ritual murder conspiracy: the juxtaposition of current police statistics listing the extraordinary numbers of missing children ("over 50,000 missing children a year...Nearly 150 children a day...are victims of Jewish ritual murder!!!!... Police reports further reveal...innocent victims of Jewish ritual murder...are sacrificed within 48 hours of abduction!"). Interestingly, these same statistics are posited as proof of human sacrifices by satanic cults in America. See Alan H. Peterson, *The American Focus on Satanic Crime, Volume I* (Millburn, NJ: American Focus Publishing, 1988), FOREWORD. Finally, the most complete presentation of this belief comes, predictably, from neo-Nazi circles. Der Friekorpsmann, a small neo-Nazi group from Texas, puts out a magazine whose title, *Jew Watch*, is a conscious parody of the 'watchdog' organization Klan Watch. A recent number of this publication contains a lavish 31 page recitation, complete with photographs, of Jewish ritual murder beliefs, based on both Arnold Leese and translations of Julius Striecher's 1934 series in *Der Sturmer* (unflatteringly described in *Jew Watch* as "a German forerunner to America's *National Enquirer*"). See *Jew Watch* 16 (n. d.).

<sup>137</sup> John C. Calhoun & Louis Beam, "The Perfected Order of the Klan," pp. 3-4. In an interesting parallel to the Protocols conspiracy scenario, pastor Thomas Robb claims that there exists a text, issued to selected elite Jews in numbered editions called the *The Book of*

Reconstructed Traditions--especially Robert Miles' Dualist Church--all subscribe to this view (with the possible exception of most Odinist groups).<sup>139</sup>

6. A manichaeian world view often leads the believer to view history as conspiratorial, and perhaps more important, induces the adherent to see himself as a small and somewhat helpless figure, locked in almost hopeless battle with the malign forces that rule this world. The adherent thus must cling to his faith in this sea of troubles until the preordained time of ultimate victory. In the meantime, he must occupy<sup>140</sup> as a part of a tiny 'righteous remnant'. And the key concept here is 'tiny!' Not one constituent of the white supremacist constellation seems to harbor the slightest hope of attracting more than a handful of followers--and this despite a virtual mountain of publications and a tireless personal outreach.<sup>141</sup> Perhaps more than any other ideological variable, it is this sense of helpless

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*the Bible in the Hands of the Creator*. It was, he asserts, found by a friend of his in his capacity as an insurance claims adjuster investigating a Jewish household after a fire. Although he has not himself seen this book, he is conversant with its contents, at least in part. The role of this mysterious text is unclear, although the impression was left that it is a blueprint for Jewish action, along the lines of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Author's interview with Thomas Robb, 24 August 1991.

<sup>138</sup> See the two-part essay: Mrs. Norma Cox, "Secrets," *Euro-American Quarterly* 3 (Autumn 1980) and *Euro-American Quarterly* 4 (Winter 1981).

<sup>139</sup> See for example, *From The Mountain* (September-October 1980). Odinism in its most extreme racist forms holds for the Jewish conspiracy theory, as in Paul Hartmann's *Thor: Hammer of the Gods* 3 (c. 1977). More common however is a milder Christian conspiracy against the old gods.

<sup>140</sup> Luke 19:13, "Occupy until I come."

<sup>141</sup> This plethora of material is described best by Ross Upton, head of the Jonathan Swift Society, a research center specializing in unravelling what they see as the master conspiracy governing the modern U. S.:

...there is more to learn...mountains of paperwork, hundreds of audio cassettes, many video cassettes, books beyond counting all circulating within the patriotic underground. Either we will restore our constitutional form of government or we will be the best educated slaves in the history of mankind.

Letter from Ross Upton, 14 February 1992.

despair at ever being able to convince more than a miniscule group of the Truth as they know it that finally spurs the believers to action. This conception would tend to argue against the standard social science theories of political violence as relevant to the mobilization of Christian Identity adherents into an active revolutionary mode.<sup>142</sup> For example, the turn to violence by a small number of adherents came in the mid to late 1970s, following years of violent rhetoric emanating largely from the California group around William Potter Gale and Wesley Swift, which was later taken to Idaho with Richard Butler and his acolytes. Why were these calls suddenly heeded by a few (and ignored by many)? The economy was comparatively robust--there is no indication in movement literature that Identity adherents felt themselves to be losing ground vis á vis other Americans, suggesting that relative deprivation theories are of limited utility in the case of Identity adherents.<sup>143</sup> Jobs were available, and the limited affirmative action programs had yet to become a matter of public debate. Nor was immigration a primary concern, defined in this context as threatening to jobs or status. Nor are Identity Christians members of a rootless urban proletariat comprised of, in Norman Cohn's terms, dazed urban migrants in a period of rapid and bewildering social change.<sup>144</sup> Suffice then to say that there appears to be a purely individual psychological point beyond which the believer simply cannot continue to

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<sup>142</sup> These theories, including a somewhat uncomprehending treatment of Norman Cohn's scenario for millenarian violence, may be viewed in thick Germanic prose in Ekhart Zimmerman, *Political Violence, Crises And Revolutions* (Cambridge, MA: Schenkman Publishing Co., 1983). The standard sociological examination of the right wing is Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Raab, *The Politics of Unreason*, Second Edition (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1978). Cf. Seymour Martin Lipset, "Social Stratification and Right Wing Extremism," *The British Journal of Sociology* 4 (December 1959).

<sup>143</sup> Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970). A flood of literature on deprivation theory followed in the wake of this publication.

<sup>144</sup> Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit Of The Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians And Mystical Anarchists Of The Middle Ages*. The farm crisis of the 1980s which brought fame to Gordon Kahl does not seem to have caused significant radicalization among displaced family farmers.

merely proselyte for his view, and must actively undertake some positive action, or conversely, give up the belief system altogether.<sup>145</sup>

An important question arises at this point, and while no final answers may be posited, it must at least be addressed. This is: what can be said of the psychology of the adherent in the more violent reaches of the movement? Psychological explanations for extremism of any sort is a risky venture, and one perhaps best left to the province of forensic psychiatrists and the legal forums in which this arcane specialty may be practiced. On rare occasion however, a source emerges through which the mind of the extremist may be held up to view, both through the external theories of the psychiatrist and through the self view of the adherent. Such a source is the recent number of Richard Snell's prison newsletter, *The Seekers*.

Richard Snell is currently on death row in Texarcana, Texas. During his appeal process, Snell published--with some considerable embarrassment--a transcript in which his psychological state is discussed in most unflattering terms by a forensic psychiatrist

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<sup>145</sup> Simply abandoning the belief structure is apparently not uncommon. Conversation with Laird Wilcox 18 December 1991. This sentiment was expressed by a South Carolina minister who abandoned Identity in favor of a fundamentalist ministry on the grounds that "...Identity is a movement of hate, and far from being Christian." Undated letter, name withheld. Another South Carolina former Identity minister goes further:

I hesitate to speak so plainly as you do not know me and may misunderstand the spirit in which I write. But I will write plainly and give you fair warning: After spending a number of years in the Identity Movement, I found it to be a system of works based on ridiculous theories and suppositions contrived by those who have not the least understanding of the the precious and full labor of Jesus Christ. Among them I found few who had submitted their lives and dictates of the Son of God [sic].

I have seen homes and families destroyed by their intolerance of the beliefs of children, wives, parents, etc.--hardly a one of them have any lasting relationships. Many are directed by doctrines that are so divisive that they can only be inspired by Satan himself (many refuse to believe in Satan). Most run from preacher to preacher seeing what new thing they can hear--never coming to the full understanding of anything...

Letter dated 14 January 1992, name withheld.

appointed by the court. The testimony of the expert, Dr. Brad Fisher, is printed by Mr. Snell because: "Whether it's expedient or not, fairness demands we let you read what the enemy thinks of us, after all it was your tax dollars that paid the expert to dig out all this info. After reading, you will not only have what we wrote, what our friends have to say, or what dear old mother may have said, but a balance of opinion assisting you to arrive at your own conclusions. We believe we owe this to you who have stood by us in this ordeal and to all who may read our opinions in the future. Is this fair?"<sup>146</sup>

Dr. Fisher's conclusions are straightforward enough. He finds that from at least 1983, Richard Snell was suffering from a "paranoid delusional disorder," with a second axis diagnosis of a "paranoid personality disorder."<sup>147</sup> The symptoms of this delusion are primarily a conspiratorial view of history, the view that the U. S. government has fallen to a shadowy group of conspirators known as ZOG (Zionist Occupation Group), and that the minions of this cabal have participated in the persecution of Mr. Snell personally, and that said persecution commenced years before his attraction to Identity theology, and that it drive him out of his photography business in the 1960s. Worse: "He believes that Armageddon and race wars will happen within the next two years."<sup>148</sup> So advanced was this paranoia that the suicide of his son, Ken, connected to despair over drug use, was posited by Mr. Snell as the fault of ZOG--the entity ultimately responsible for the proliferation of drugs in America.<sup>149</sup>

And what does the prisoner have to say to all this? On the death of his son:

Ken's suicide: abruptly my thoughts were plucked as by an eagle snatching his prey and lifted back in time to an event shrouded

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<sup>146</sup> Richard Snell, "Ed Sez," *The Seekers* (March-April 1992), p. 1.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid., pp. 5-6.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., p. 5.



in the cloak of attempted forgetfulness. A chilling rain was falling on that cold December morning in '78, the weeping family, a circle of friends who could find no comfort, the preacher intoning "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust..." as an unopened casket was lowered into a dark hole in the sandy loam of South Arkansas. Unopenable because a twelve-gauge shotgun under the chin does a trick to one's head.<sup>150</sup>

And is Snell mad?

Deluded? God, let it be so! A prison cage will become a palace if suddenly evidence is presented that this nightmare was only paranoia, merely a bad dream without reality. Time will tell. I must--and can rest in this.<sup>151</sup>

While Richard Snell is virtually alone in the Identity world in having killed in his quest to punish the Jews, for many, action of some kind becomes at some point increasingly imperative. When this occurs, the literature of the white supremacist constellation becomes at once strongly exclusivist, positing the adherent as a member of the elect, and outspokenly bitter at the majority of society in whose interest the activist believes he has sacrificed so much. Consider the following expressions of this pain from the various constituencies of the white supremacist constellation:

What the Organization began doing...is treating Americans realistically...like a herd of cattle. Since they are no longer capable of responding to an idealistic appeal, we began appealing to things they can understand: fear and hunger...We will treat them exactly as they deserve to be treated.<sup>152</sup>

All about us the land is dying. Our cities swarm with dusky hordes. The water is rancid and the air is rank. Our farms are being seized by usurious leeches and our people are being forced off the land.

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<sup>150</sup> Ibid., p. 7, n. 2.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>152</sup> Andrew Macdonald, *The Turner Diaries*, p. 101.

The Capitalists and the Communists pick gleefully at our bones while the vile hook-nosed masters of usury orchestrate our destruction. What is to become of our children in a land such as this? Yet still our people sleep!<sup>153</sup>

It is a tragic indictment upon the American People to contemplate the awesome truth that they have allowed their country, their constitution, and their cherished freedom under God [to be lost], even forfeiting the future of their children...without **so much as lifting their voice in protest.**<sup>154</sup> [emphasis in original]

Even if we were to link up all the Klan groups, all Identity, Nazis or whatever, then so what? We still don't amount to anything.<sup>155</sup>

And perhaps most poignant of all:

For a long time it bothered this writer that only a small percentage of the people he addressed understood the message, felt a sense of urgency, and acted upon it. However, as the idea that "the majority is always wrong" began to sink in, that there is only a small minority of thinking people who will take a stand for good and against evil (i.e., the remnant) in any country or civilization, then this writer began to forget the numbers (the masses) and to concentrate on reaching the remnant.

...Many MIA [*McAlvany Intelligence Advisor*] readers have written to describe how they feel that they are like "a voice crying in the wilderness," at home, at school, at work and how friends or family laugh at their concerns about the country and its direction. Many have described the flack they have received from people to whom they have given copies of MIA.

If you ever feel alone, and get discouraged about the direction of the country, or your friends' or family's indifference to it, the following article...should pick you up a bit as it does this

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<sup>153</sup> Bob Mathews of the Order, in that organization's declaration of war against ZOG, quoted in Kevin Flynn and Gary Gerhardt, *The Silent Brotherhood*, p. 361. Mathews adopted the term "sheeple" for the sleeping American masses. The term has subsequently been picked up by other centers of Christian patriotism: "The problem that we see contributing to the downfall of our once great nation are first and foremost the apathy of the American Sheeple." Ross Upton in an undated form letter from the Jonathan Swift Society.

<sup>154</sup> Dan Gayman, "War Crimes against the American People," *Zions Watchman* 3 (February 1978), p. 2.

<sup>155</sup> Author's interview with Thomas Robb, 24 August 1991.

writer when he reads it. The message is, you are not alone!<sup>156</sup> [all emphasis in original]

7. Despairing of ever of their own volition righting the course of history, of ever being more than marginal voices in the American body politic, yet refusing to simply surrender the belief system, what is left? How can action be contemplated with so slim a hope of success? Only through millenarian eyes does there exist a hope, nay, a certainty of final victory. In the logic of the millenarian, when things are at their worst, they are in fact at their best. For eschatological prophecy centers on the belief that when the world is at its worst, when sin is at its apogee, then and only then will salvation come to the believer.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>156</sup> Donald S. McAlvany, "Encouragement for the Remnant," *The McAlvany Intelligence Advisor* (December 1991), p. 3. The reference is to an appended article by Albert Jay Nock (1870-1945). That article, "Isaiah's Job," is taken from Nock's long out of print *Free Speech and Plain Language* (New York: William Morrow & Company, 1937), and was distributed for many years through *The Freeman*, a magazine which Nock edited from 1920-1924, and which was distributed by the Foundation for Economic Education. Nock's essay is a stirring call for modern day prophets to concentrate their efforts on a discerning remnant rather than on the 'mass men' whose adulation is so eagerly and profitably sought by anyone with an idea in these degenerate days. The essay is carried in the *The McAlvany Intelligence Advisor*, pp. 3-5. Cf. the reprint taken from the McAlvany newsletter in *Kinship Communication* newsletter (January 1992), p. 1. Another reprint, with a glowing recommendation, by Gary North, in "What is the Remnant?" special publication of *The Remnant Review* (April 1992), pp. 2-5. North's Institute for Christian Economics spearheads the postmillennialist Reconstructionist movement. North himself clearly identifies with the prophet without honor depicted by Nock. See North's essay in "What is the Remnant": "Jeremiah's Job," pp. 6-8. North makes this theme even more explicit in a letter to all Institute for Christian Economics subscribers dated April 1992 under the subheading "The Prophet Must Learn to Say 'No!'" (p. 5).

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You may be sure that in the last days there will be some difficult times. People will be self-centered and avaricious, boastful, arrogant and rude; disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, irreligious; heartless and intractable; they will be slanderers, profligates, savages and enemies of everything that is good; they will be treacherous and reckless and demented by pride, preferring their own pleasure to God. They will keep up the outward appearance of religion but will have rejected the inner power of it. Keep away from people like that. [2 Timothy 3:1-5]

Dearly beloved brothers, believe the Holy Spirit who speaks in us. We have already told you that the End of the world is near, the consummation remains. Has not faith withered away from mankind? How many foolish things are seen among youths, how

But for the millenarian, violence is far from the preferred course of action. Now as in the early Christian communities, the dominant model of millenarianism is quietism, withdrawal from the surrounding society to as great a degree as possible, faith and prayer are much more the norm; they live each day in the confidence that it may well be the last on the earth as they knew it--yet they prudently plant the crops for the Spring. And in the white supremacist constellation, while the violent revolutionary activism of such as the Order has made the headlines, it is the quietist withdrawal mode that is far more common.

Yet there remains in millenarian movements an inherent dynamism, or an instability, which defies easy categorization. A single movement can begin in the quietist camp, be pulled into the dream of revolutionary violence as a method to, as it were, force the End, only to return to the withdrawal mode with the frustration of immediate chiliastic hopes. So complex is this dynamic that the final section of this chapter will examine the millenarian phenomenon among white supremacist groups through the microcosm of the Christian Identity Church of Israel headed by pastor Dan Gayman of Schell City, Missouri. It is hoped that such an examination will provide a model of millenarianism applicable to other sectors the white supremacist constellation.

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many crimes among prelates, how many lies among priests, how many perjuries among deacons! There are evil deeds among the ministers, adulteries in the aged, wantonness in the youths-in mature women false faces, in the virgins dangerous traces! [Pseudo Ephraem (6th-7th century)]

From Bernard McGinn, ed., *Visions of the End: Apocalyptic Traditions in the Middle Ages* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), p. 61.

#### IV. The Church of Israel

The Church of Israel (COI) pastored by Dan Gayman has been at the center of the evolving Identity movement<sup>158</sup> for the past 15 years, and the changes in outlook, doctrine and political behavior of the COI very much reflect the tumult of the racist right wing during this period of American history. The importance of the Church of Israel may reliably be attributed to the status of its pastor, Dan Gayman, arguably the premier theologian in the Identity movement today.<sup>159</sup> Given the importance of this institution to modern Christian Identity, an examination of the movement's ideas and activities may shed some light on the closed, yet highly diverse, world which we have dubbed the white supremacist constellation. This section therefore, will concentrate on: (1) the history of pastor Gayman and the Church of Israel (COI); (2) the Church of Israel within the white supremacist constellation; (3) COI doctrine; and (4) conclusion and future prospects.

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<sup>158</sup> Given the reputation for violence with which Identity Christianity has been associated in recent years, many in the movement have preferred to drop the 'Identity' designation entirely. This is the case with the Church of Israel. COI members refer to themselves as Israelites, and their doctrine as Kingdom theology. The reference is to the chiliastic Kingdom to be ushered in by the imminent return of Christ. Conversation with Dan Gayman, 17 August 1991.

<sup>159</sup> Christian Identity theorists rarely produce theology worthy of the name. Identity theology is simply in too great a state of flux, with pastors concentrating on releasing studies of particular doctrinal issues without making a great effort to link these ideas into a coherent theology. The Church of Israel is the primary exception to this rule. See, for example, the COI credal statement; "Articles of Faith and Doctrine (Church of Israel)," in J. Gordon Melton, ed., *The Encyclopedia of American Religions: Religious Creeds* (Detroit, MI: Gale Research Co., 1988), pp. 626-633. The Church of Israel's publishing arm continues to issue monographs on specific points of doctrine, while the cassette ministry and the Church's primary outreach organ, the *Watchman*, provide evidence of a teaching ministry of considerable quality. Even enemies of the Church, and there are many, accord the theological material emanating from the Church considerable respect, as will be seen from the reaction to the Phineas Priesthood controversy considered below. Nor is respect for the Church of Israel limited to the U.S. See the journal of the London based Christian Israel Foundation (British Israel World Federation), "Linking the Family," *Wake Up!* 8 (September/October 1991), pp. 178-179.

1. Dan Gayman was born in 1937 in Denver, Colorado, and was raised without a father, who died when he was still a child. An honors graduate of Southwest Missouri State University in 1964 with a major in history, and residing since 1967 in Schell City, pastor Gayman undertook a career in public education, eventually becoming the teacher-principal of Walker High School, before opting in 1976 for a full time career in the ministry.

Beyond this thumbnail sketch, pastor Gayman's biography becomes somewhat difficult to reconstruct.<sup>160</sup> In his own words:

I had the good fortune to be born into a home where God and scripture were considered important. Some of my earliest childhood memories include Church services in Denver, Colorado where I was born, and Pine and Conifer, Colorado, in the mountains north of Denver. My parents continued to attend Church when we moved to rural Missouri, so I was churched all of my early life. I became interested in scripture at a very early age, studied the Bible along with other textbooks at a rural one room country school, and made it a point to try to read the Bible through once a year when I was in High School...At the age of 21, I began preaching and doing evangelistic work among rural Churches of Christ in Southwest Missouri...I was preaching Kingdom/Israel truth at all of these small Churches of Christ at that time.<sup>161</sup>

As early as 1960, I began placing total focus on the Gospel of the Kingdom. At that time...I was preaching just up from our present Church of Israel sanctuary. We were holding spring, summer and fall conferences throughout the 1960s, and these conferences became formal festival celebrations in 1970. Throughout the 1960s, we published a church magazine called *Zion's Restorer*. This publication became *Zion's Watchman* in 1973 and was later shortened to *The Watchman*.<sup>162</sup> The Gospel of the Kingdom has

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<sup>160</sup> Dan Gayman's biography is pieced together from the following sources: "For Readers of Zions Watchman," *Zions Watchman* 1 (January 1977), p. 6; Conversation with Dan Gayman, 17 August 1991; Interview with Dan Gayman, 9-11 December 1991; "Kitchen Table Talk," *Watchman* 4 (Fall 1991), pp. 36-37; J. Gordon Melton, *Encyclopedic Handbook of Cults in America*, p. 57; and Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, *Extremism on the Right: A Handbook*, p. 98. All direct quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are from the December interview and will not be further noted.

<sup>161</sup> Dan Gayman, "Kitchen Table Talk," *Watchman* 4 (Fall 1991), p. 36.

<sup>162</sup> Other articles appeared irregularly in a number of journals scattered across the spectrum of the White supremacist constellation.

been a focal point of the Church since about 1960. I should hasten to add that various portions of the Kingdom were preached in the church in the 1940s and 1950s by my maternal Grandfather, Jesse F. Cruz.<sup>163</sup>

As stated, Dan Gayman's interest in religious subjects dates back to his early childhood, although he discovered Kingdom theology "with a keen sense of interest" in the early 1950s through Herbert W. Armstrong's *Plain Truth Magazine* and Howard Rand's *Destiny* publications. He later sent for British Israel World Federation (BIWF) material. He soon veered away from the mild doctrines of Anglo-Israelism as propounded by Herbert W. Armstrong and the BIWF, opting instead for the racist and anti-semitic wing of the movement. In this, he was much influenced by the *Dearborn Independent* series. He had read the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, but these were never a strong influence.  
<sup>164</sup> pastor Gayman's youthful interest in British Israelism is of particular note, given his family's connection to the Church of Christ (Temple Lot), a dissident Mormon sect with centers in Denver and three other cities.<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> Dan Gayman, "Kitchen Table Talk," *Watchman* 4 (Fall 1991), p. 36.

<sup>164</sup> Pastor Gayman in this reflects an ambivalence over the influence of the *Protocols* which contrasts sharply with the wholehearted acceptance of the *Dearborn Independent* series common throughout the White Supremacist constellation. This dynamic has echoes in the scholarly world as well. The core question for scholars seems to center on the degree of influence which the *Protocols* exercised on the authors of the *Independent* series. On this debate, see Leo P. Ribuffo, "Henry Ford and the International Jew," *American Jewish History* 69 (June 1980), pp. 448-449, 469; Norman Cohn, *Warrant for Genocide*, pp. 158-162; and Albert Lee, *Henry Ford and the Jews* (New York: Stein and Day, 1980), p. 28. While taking no position on this debate, my reading of both documents suggests possible reasons for the ambivalence of current Identity leaders over the *Protocols* and the unqualified embrace by these same theorists of the *International Jew* series. The *Protocols* in their most widely available form, the Victor Marsden translation, may rank with some of the most turgid and fragmented prose ever committed to paper. More, the document resonates with imagery drawn from the 19th century crisis of Russian autocracy. It is, in fact, a strongly monarchist document, having little to say to contemporary Americans. The *Independent* series conversely, while of little more literary quality, speaks specifically to a contemporary American audience, and its themes of fear of change, alienation and despair are as relevant today as they were in the America of the 1920s.

<sup>165</sup> Dan Gayman today seeks to down play his Mormon roots. The historical record however, is clear. The Church of Christ (Temple Lot), a schismatic Mormon sect, itself

Dan Gayman received his primary training in Kingdom theology under Denver based Identity minister Kenneth Goff, a teacher to many current figures in the movement, at Goff's Soldiers of the Cross Training Institute in Denver in 1964-1965.<sup>166</sup> Immediately prior to this education however, Dan Gayman took his first substantive step into racist activism, unsuccessfully attempting to turn the Church youth camp into something of a Christian Identity adult seminary which would provide, besides theological education, weapons and survivalist training.<sup>167</sup> Armed with Ken Goff's teachings and a much strengthened sense of mission, Dan Gayman returned to Schell City to win election as a Church pastor and the editor of the Church newspaper, *Zion's Restorer*, which henceforth

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suffered a doctrinal schism in 1936. The leaders of the breakaway faction, including Dan's father, Leo Gayman and his maternal grandfather, Jesse Cruz moved the sect to Halley's Bluff and Schell City, both in Missouri, in 1945. On this history, see Gordon J. Melton, *Encyclopedic Handbook of Cults*, p. 57; Steven L. Shields, *Divergent Paths of the Restoration: A History of the Latter Day Saint Movement* (Los Angeles, CA: Restoration Research, 1990), pp. 138-139, 194; and Dwain A. Jenista, "The Church of Christ at Halley's Bluff," unpublished term paper, University of Kansas at Lawrence (Summer 1977). I would like to thank Dr. Melton for bringing the latter two documents to my attention.

<sup>166</sup> Ken Goff, an influential Identity pastor in the late 1940s and 1950s, is an interesting figure. The 1944 national chairman of Gerald L. K. Smith's Christian Youth for America group (of which Dan Gayman later became a member), and a self-proclaimed reformed communist, Goff emerges from the literature and the reminiscences of those who knew him as a decidedly equivocal man, described alternately as a brilliant preacher, a mentally unstable individual, a great patriot and a shady character, often all in the same breath. He died several years ago, fittingly in a Chicago telephone booth racing between speaking engagements according to one of his students and admirers. For a printed accolade, see Jack Mohr's dedication from *The Satanic Counterfeit* :

...to the memory of a good friend, a kinsman by blood and through the blood of Jesus Christ, Kenneth Goff. As a dedicated soldier of the Cross, he was without excellence [i.e., a prophet without honor] in the roll call of modern day American heroes. Few men faced tremendous odds and danger, with the spirit of Christ, as he did. I predict that one day soon, when the battle for righteousness has been won, he will be recognized as the great American hero he was.

Cf. such secondary sources as the excellent Ralph Lord Roy, *Apostles of Discord* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1953); and Glen Jeansonne, *Gerald L. K. Smith* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988).

<sup>167</sup> J. Gordon Melton, *Encyclopedic Handbook of Cults in America*, p. 57.



would become a stridently racist organ.<sup>168</sup> The impact of Dan Gayman's racist Identity theology and his crusading zeal had by 1972 split the Church, and created a divisive law suit pitting Dan Gayman and his faction against a faction championed by his brother Duane. The resulting court case cost Dan Gayman all but 20 acres of the Church's property.<sup>169</sup>

Why this sudden turn to activism took place is an important question. Clearly, the ferment of the 1960s was the catalyst, but on a deeper level, that unsettled time clearly stimulated the apocalyptic millenarianism which defines the Church of Israel to this day. This view is clear from the 5 March 1972 resolution through which Dan Gayman sought to effect the takeover of the Church. This resolution vowed to:

1. prepare a people for the return of Jesus Christ to earth;
2. establish [the Church] as a place of retreat for God's people;
3. establish a storehouse of the Lord as the economic order of God in these latter days; and
4. bring...Adam's race under the influence of the Gospel of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ...under the administration of...the Gospel as contained in the Articles of Faith and Practice.<sup>170</sup>

The Church of Israel today is an international ecclesiastical organization which conceptually has been divided into twelve dioceses, each named for one of the tribes of Israel. Pastor Gayman heads the Diocese of Manasseh, named for the son of Joseph and covering the United States.<sup>171</sup> How many of these dioceses are operational is unclear, although there is evidence of substantial COI activity in Great Britain and South Africa.

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<sup>168</sup> Dwain A. Jenista, "The Church of Christ at Halley's Bluff," p. 6.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid., p. 8. The document further indicates that pastor Gayman had not yet altogether quit his Mormon beliefs, pledging allegiance to the truth of Holy Scripture and the Nephite Record.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid., p. 57.

The congregation of the COI is at present about 100 individuals residing in the vicinity of Schell City, with an international mailing list of subscribers to the *Watchman* and the large cassette tape ministry which the church opened in 1977.<sup>172</sup> The COI operated in the late 1970s a Christian Day School, but recent movement literature has stressed home schooling (as well as home birthing), and the operation of home churches presided over by the family patriarch where an Israelite congregation is unavailable.<sup>173</sup>

2. In his more than 30 years of involvement with the Kingdom movement, Dan Gayman has come to know and be associated with, for better or worse, nearly every major figure in the white supremacist constellation in the post-Gerald L. K. Smith era.<sup>174</sup> The names of his associates, or mere contacts, in these years read as a veritable Who's Who of the white supremacist constellation, and includes such major figures as William Potter Gale, Buddy

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<sup>172</sup> The term 'subscriber' may be misleading. The COI asks no money either for the *Watchman* or for the tape ministry. It does accept tithes and irregular offerings, but the literature of the Church is at pains to not appear to stress finances. The exact number of persons on the mailing list, tithing or sending irregular offerings is unavailable to the author. These numbers might be inferred however, from the outreach of those centers of Identity or other religious ministries who do discuss their mailing lists. For example, the moderate *Identity News* from Minnesota, a newer and far less well established Identity center than the COI, began with a bulk mailing of 1,000 copies, and within a year had expanded to 2,000 copies. However, these numbers are misleading, as "only about 2% of those who received the paper actually requested it. The rest went to people whose names I pulled from phone books." "Letters," *Identity News* (February 1992), p. 8. Lest this sound too idiosyncratic to serve as a model, consider the experience of Gary North of Christian Reconstruction fame. After 15 years of tireless outreach, and a veritable mountain of published work, the Institute for Christian Economics can boast a mailing list of only 2,000 names! Gary North, "Fifteen Years of Invested Time," letter to all ICE subscribers, April, 1992.

<sup>173</sup> Dan Gayman, "Handbook for Establishing a Home Church," pamphlet from the Church of Israel, 1990; Dan Gayman, "Drawing Battle Lines," *Watchman* 3 (Summer 1991), pp. 19-22; Leni Walker, "Building Your Home Altar" *Watchman* 3 (Spring 1991), pp. 8-9.

<sup>174</sup> Gayman knew Smith and attended his funeral, but was too young for any close association with a figure whom he considered in any case too secular. He does know Smith's widow, an intensely religious woman, somewhat better. Buddy Tucker delivered a eulogy at the funeral, and reportedly considered himself a potential successor to Smith. On Tucker, see Glen Jeansonne, *Gerald L. K. Smith*, p. 210.

Tucker, Thom Robb, Richard Butler, Sheldon Emry, James Warner and many more. So self-contained is the world of the white supremacist constellation that even for those individuals who were not direct contacts, no name mentioned by the author from Wesley Swift to Robert Miles to the three generations of Winrods<sup>175</sup> was unknown to him. In fact, by 1987, in the wake of the the Order's violent activities and with the indictments in the Fort Smith sedition trial on the horizon, the Church was forced to confront the 'incestuousness' of the white supremacist constellation. The Church of Israel passed a resolution on 15 January of that year:

The CHURCH OF ISRAEL, realizing that the religious and political right in America is charged with many diverse ideologies, feels an urgent need to point those who desire to be Christians toward a Christ-centered walk in this evil world.

In order that all may clearly understand the position of the CHURCH OF ISRAEL in the midst of this unsettled time in history, be it hereby known that the CHURCH OF ISRAEL has no mission apart from the above stated commitment, and the Board of Trustees, the Pastor, and the congregation of the same in America and throughout the world do not offer this Church as a sanctuary, cover, or "safe house" for any person or persons, organizations or groups, that teach civil disobedience, violence, militant armed might, gun-running, para-military training, hatred of blacks, reprisals against the Jews, posse commitatus, dualist, odinist, Ku Klux Klan, Neo-Nazi, national socialism, Hitler cult, stealing, welfare fraud,<sup>176</sup> murder, war against the government of the United States,<sup>177</sup> polygamy, driving unlicensed vehicles, hunting game without proper licenses, etc.<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> Gerald (dubbed the Jayhawk Nazi), Gordon, and now David. Gerald and Gordon's work is noted elsewhere in this chapter. For the misadventures of young master David in his quest to establish a community of transplanted midwesterners in the most distant reaches of the Alaskan islands, see the series in the *Ketchikan Daily News* from April-May, 1991.

<sup>176</sup> Stealing seems a reference to the spectacular armored car heists carried out by the Order, while both stealing and welfare fraud were practiced by Ellison's CSA.

<sup>177</sup> Bob Mathews of the Order's declaration of war against ZOG was quoted in part earlier, and may be found in full in Kevin Flynn and Gary Gerhardt, *The Silent Brotherhood*, pp. 360-361.

<sup>178</sup> Church of Israel, "Articles of Faith and Doctrine," booklet published by Church of Israel, Schell City Missouri, 10 January 1982, p. 31. That the resolution was enforced by

This resolution was the outcome of the turn toward revolutionary violence throughout the white supremacist constellation in the late 1970s and early 1980s.<sup>179</sup> In

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the COI is evidenced by the outraged denunciation of the resolution by one of its victims, Dennis McMahon, an Oklahoma Klansman, who decries the fact that he was ejected from the Schell City compound on the grounds of his KKK affiliation. D. W. McMahon, "Dan Gayman's Infamous Resolution," *The Oklahoma Satirist* (November 1991), pp. 6-7.

<sup>179</sup> Pastor Gayman was not alone in his concern about the violent turn in Kingdom circles by the time the 1982 COI resolution was propounded. For a good example of these concerns, see the warnings issued by Jack Mohr, a genuine hero of the Korean war, about the essential silliness and ultimate futility of Kingdom believers turning towards displays of weapons, paramilitary chic uniforms, and such empty shows of bravado as reviving in Identity circles a 'cult of Hitler' and threatening Kingdom believers who disagreed with them about violence. Jack Mohr, "Wanted! A Few Good Men! (a call for volunteers in the army of the Lord!)," undated self-published pamphlet from Bay St. Louis, Mississippi.:

Some of our Identity people have gone to the extremes of trying to prove [their toughness] by parading around in camouflage suits, carrying their pretty guns, as though these things were the mark of the "warriors for Jesus Christ." In doing this, we set ourselves up as "extremists, a danger to all who do not believe as we do. This is stupid!..."Don't go around bragging how you are going to beat up on the minorities, and the Jews; don't shout your hatred of others from the housetops and tell how you are going to eliminate them." Instead be prepared! Be ready for the battle, but don't brag about it.

The futility of this course is then illustrated in the pamphlet by the experience of former C.S.A. adherent, Randall Rader, a one-time follower of Jim Ellison (who would prove the ultimate traitor to the movement in Ft. Smith):

I knew a man recently who was obsessed with his own strength. His name was Randall Rader. He was in charge of the military training of the C.S.A. (the Cross [sic], the Sword and the Arm of the Lord). He told me: "I'll never surrender! If the government messes with us, we will give them a chance to surrender before we wipe them out! He loved to strut around in his camouflage uniform, with a pistol strapped on his waist and a Mini-14 slung over his shoulder. He was the very picture of a brave man! Then he became involved with the ORDER in Washington and when that group "blew up," he was the first man to fold under government pressure. He cooperated so thoroughly with those he once considered his enemy, that he is now out on parole, while his comrades are serving long prison sentences...[all punctuation as in original]

retreat since the loss of school integration battles stemming from the 1954 Brown vs. Board of Education case, and eclipsed in popular attention by radicals of the left, the far right was a cauldron waiting to explode. The key Identity figure in this explosion in the view of Dan Gayman was a California associate of Wesley Swift, William Potter Gale.<sup>180</sup> Gale, a military man who served under General MacArthur in the Philippines, was a powerful voice in prodding the heretofore quietist Identity movement into action, and it was in the wake of this call that a split occurred in the movement which has not been healed to this day: that between the militant activist and quietist camps within this millenarian community. The call to action was unquestionably seductive--after all, millenarian movements coalesce in the first instance around the perception that the End is very near. And the apocalypse, scripture assures us, will not be a pretty sight.

Thus while pastor Gayman is unquestionably correct in finding William Potter Gale to be highly influential in the drift towards violence which took place in the 1970s, there were other, less radical, voices as well. The Christian Patriots Defense League under John Harrell and Jack Mohr and its component organizations (Citizens Emergency Defense System, Save America Gun Club, Women's Survival Corps, Paul Revere Club, and last but hardly least, the Civilian Air Force) for example, in the 1970s flirted with the call of revolutionary violence as well. Put under the operational command of the commander of the Citizens Emergency Defense System, Col. B. F. M. von Stahl, U. S. Army (ret), the annual Freedom Festivals held at John Harrell's replica of Mt. Vernon in Louisville, Illinois featured training in survival skills, arms and urban combat tactics. This form of violence, in contrast to that espoused by William Gale in California, was posited as

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<sup>180</sup> Gayman's view: "I get the idea that Wesley Swift laid the radicalism, but Gale laid the background for the Radicalism. He had a strong military mind...." In personal terms, "Bill Gale may have contributed a little to my militancy, but I never, ever was a member of anything he organized." Forming around Gale were adherents who would become driving forces in such sectors of the White supremacist constellation as the Posse Comitatus, the Aryan Nations, *et. al.*

defensive in nature,<sup>181</sup> and as such it won support from no less an Identity paragon than pastor Sheldon Emry.<sup>182</sup> Pastor Emry, like pastor Gayman, was hardly a man to endorse violence directed toward anyone, but as with so many Identity theorists, the rejection of the Rapture doctrine left the adherent faced with the certainty that apocalyptic violence was inevitable, and the natural result of such a vision is all too often a survivalist call to do whatever is necessary to persevere through the dreadful times of the Tribulation.<sup>183</sup> It is this survivalism which is at the heart of John Harrell's CPDL ministry, and to men such as Harrell, Emry and Gayman, the late 1970s appear to have been a time of acute eschatological excitement.

Given this schism among activist/quietist elements of the Identity world, some definitions are in order. Activism in the context of this split is defined as advocating the use of force in pursuit of revolutionary change. As noted above, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, a significant minority of voices in the Kingdom movement called for such action. Some, such as John Harrell's various Christian Patriot organizations in downstate Illinois, James Ellison's CSA compound in Missouri, and Richard Butler's Aryan Nations annual jamboree offered paramilitary training for weekend warriors until ADL model anti-paramilitary training statutes brought this game to an end.<sup>184</sup> Only the Order however

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<sup>181</sup> John Harrell, "Policy Statement: Why the Christian-Patriots Defense League Works With Such a Broad Spectrum of Patriotic Organizations," undated position paper issued by the CPDL.

<sup>182</sup> Open Letter from Sheldon Emry on the subject of the Citizens Emergency Defense System, 27 November 1979.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid.

<sup>184</sup> The ADL model statute is published in Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, *Hate Groups In America: A Record of Bigotry and Violence* (New York: ADL, 1988), p. 54. On the more ambitious ADL involvement with "hate Crimes" legislation, see Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, *Hate Crimes Statutes: A 1991 Status Report* (New York: ADL, 1991). A good example of the effect of the banning of paramilitary training on the camps may be seen in the curtailment of John Harrell's Christian Patriot Defense League Freedom Festivals. See Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, *Extremism on the Right: A Handbook*, p. 11. On the psychological benefits the festivals brought to those who attended, consider the recollection of Richard Snell:

appears to have gone beyond the rhetorical stage and entered actively into an operational mode. Quietism, conversely, may be equated with an accommodationist stance.

Millenarians in a quietist mode will acquiesce to government authority even as they condemn the state as illegitimate or unjust, and seek to withdraw to as great a degree as possible from that society. Political engagement thus becomes selective. Laws are obeyed (so long as they do not too egregiously violate religious conscience), taxes are paid, and voting is encouraged even if only to oppose the greater of two evils in an election. At the same time however, the millenarian seeks to set boundaries around a kind of sacred enclave which he erects to shield familial relationships, education, church government, and the like from society.<sup>185</sup> Dan Gayman in the 1970s leaned decisively towards the radical camp,<sup>186</sup> and moved only gradually towards the partial withdrawal from American society characteristic of the Church today. Lacking much real contact with the dominant culture, then as now, this activist/quietist dialogue was conducted purely within the movement, and such a closed circle of debate rarely yields positive results.

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"...my thoughts detoured to Louisville, Illinois; here a convention was in progress in the year of '81, and to my joy it was discovered that there were thousands who thought as I. Here were a people determined to right wrongs and cure the ills of society. Weren't they? It was here that I discovered that the *Book* [Bible] I had disavowed long ago made sense when one took the time to unravel what had been twisted.

Richard Snell, "Ed Sez," *The Seekers* (March-April 1992), p. 7.

<sup>185</sup> Emmanuel Sivan, "The Enclave Culture," in Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, eds., *Accounting for Fundamentalisms: The Dynamic Character of Movements* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, forthcoming).

<sup>186</sup> Typical of this stance according to Gordon Melton was pastor Gayman's transformation of the Church youth camp into a paramilitary "training ground to teach weapons use and tactics." J. Gordon Melton, *Encyclopedic Handbook of Cults in America*, p. 57.

There simply are few media outlets in which the Identity message, suitably modified, may be disseminated.<sup>187</sup> For example, Pete Peters' Scriptures for America has an expanding radio ministry which will grow larger with the addition of time on the 50,000 watt station KAAV of Little Rock, Arkansas. Peters' media outreach includes 2 weekly shortwave broadcasts heard throughout the U.S. and Europe.<sup>188</sup> The KAAV air time was taken over from pastor Dave Barley's America's Promise Ministries, inherited from the late Phoenix based Identity patriarch, Sheldon Emry. Pastor Barley moved this ministry to Sandpoint Idaho, and has recently decided to abandon the radio network painstakingly built up over a lifetime by pastor Emry, and risk all on a television venture, Spacenet 1, which can be picked up only by satellite dish.<sup>189</sup> The small Joppa Gospel Tabernacle & Kinship Ministry of Baltimore, Maryland, is carried on six stations in as many states. All time slots are on weekend evenings.<sup>190</sup>

The technical and financial difficulties of putting even a moderate Identity ministry on the radio are discussed by Bill Strittmatter of the Christian Committee of Lakemore, Ohio. The Christian Committee specializes in a Bible Law course conducted through the mails. Eventually, the Christian Committee was able to buy time on eleven stations in eight states. After an intricate review of the financial investment, technology required, and time

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<sup>187</sup> Media access has always a problem for Christian Identity, but it was arguably not until the W.W. II era reaction against such figures as Gerald L. K. Smith or Father Coughlin that the problem became acute. However, a moderate Identity theorist, James S. McGaw from Los Angeles for example, maintained a local broadcast schedule on KGER in the 1940s and beyond. Pastor McGaw in fact, credits a Jewish merchant for his conversion to Identity, recalling that the unnamed Jew presented him with a copy of Allen's *Judah's Scepter and Joseph's Birthright* in response to the then Rev. McGaw's attempts to engage the Jew in theological conversation. See James S. McGaw D.D., "Suppose We Are Israel: What Difference Does it Make?" (Los Angeles, Ca.: National Message Ministry, n.d.), p. 1.

<sup>188</sup> On Pete Peters, see *Scriptures for America*, Volume 1 (1992).

<sup>189</sup> On Dave Barley, see "A Special Announcement to our Friends and Supporters," undated form letter from America's Promise Ministries.

<sup>190</sup> See any copy of Joppa Gospel Tabernacle & Kinship Ministry's *News & Views*.



slots desired, Mr. Strittmatter demonstrates that the effort is worthwhile on dollars and cents grounds, comparing the costs of reaching a projected audience with printed flyers as opposed to a single radio broadcast.<sup>191</sup>

The media outreach noted above however, remains the exception rather than the rule. The fate of radio station KTTL in Dodge City, Kansas which in 1983 broadcast unretouched sermons from William Potter Gale's California based Identity ministry is the most widely publicized example of the risks of 'going public' with the unadulterated Identity message.<sup>192</sup> The Spacenet 1 project of Dave Barley's America's Promise Ministries has drawn strong organized opposition.<sup>193</sup> David Duke was forced to make implausible denials of his current role in the white supremacist constellation to run for Louisiana governor. Tom Metzger's "Race and Reason" public access television show is defunct in the wake of his legal problems, and the dreaded computer bulletin boards too are defunct, the victim of the deplorable level of computer literacy in the world of white Supremacy.<sup>194</sup>

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<sup>191</sup> "Letters," *Identity News* (December 1991), pp. 9-11.

<sup>192</sup> ADL, *Extremism on the Right*, pp. 96-97. Unable to get the FCC to block the station's request for a licence renewal, the station was eventually forced to surrender its license to a local community group, thus "bringing to an end the objectionable broadcasting."

<sup>193</sup> For letters, articles from the local newspaper, and pastor Barley's outraged defense, see "A Predictable Event Has Occurred," *America's Promise Newsletter* (March 1992), pp. 21-30. This selection of material is of particular interest in that it resurrects the opposition in Sand Point, Idaho to the original relocation of the America's Promise ministry from Phoenix shortly after the demise of pastor Sheldon Emry.

<sup>194</sup> On the fears of the potential of this technology to break through to a wider audience, see Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, "Computerized Networks of Hate," *ADL Fact Finding Report* (January, 1985). On the current state of the art, see Robert Miles' *From the Mountain* (November-December 1985), p. 3, which has Miles noting a report from Robert Dyslin with the conclusion that: "The need for computer technicians is apparent..." No more graphic description of the problem can be offered than that of the spectacle of Klansman Louis Beam, the guiding light behind the "computerized networks of hate" up to the time he fled to Mexico to avoid arrest in connection with the Fort Smith case, offering his readers a primer on computer terms and technology in Louis Beam, "Computers and Patriots," *The Seditonist* 10 (Summer 1991), pp. 8-10. The same article "proudly" offers the telephone number of the Texas Liberty Net telephone bulletin

This then is a significant finding in the study of the white supremacist constellation: with access to communication with the wider culture increasingly closed to most members of the white supremacist community, communication for a number of years has turned increasingly inward, with adherents talking largely in a closed circle to themselves. Only rarely have balanced articles or news reports on their activities appeared in the mass media, and these have often centered on the most 'newsworthy', i. e. violent aspects of the movement. Thus when an article appears in a major newsmagazine which portrays the adherents' ideas thoughtfully or fairly, it is considered quite a coup, and is much heralded. Thus Thom Robb, the media wise Arkansas based Klan and Identity leader considers the press to have been, on balance, fair to him and his movement.<sup>195</sup> A *Time Magazine* piece on John Harrell's 1979 Freedom Festival was still being reproduced and distributed, complete with a typed postscript, by his Christian Patriots Defense League in 1992.<sup>196</sup> The brief postscript by John Harrell is worth reproducing as an indication of the complex attitudes toward the mainstream media:

Note: This is one of hundreds of recently published accounts of our activities. Although few publications present the issues and dangers in the proper light and understanding, nonetheless, it spreads the word to the extent that concerned and interested American Patriots can know of our effort. Therefore, any article that has even a tendency to alert citizens is valuable, for Patriots are now beginning to read between the lines of any report. The reprint from Time magazine has been considered by many to be quite beneficial, especially in the contacting of those who are more liberal-minded, as many of them will rally to the Nation's standard when they see that all they have is about to be destroyed forever.

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board: an expensive alternative which makes the dissemination of printed matter impossible. A 'pale' substitute!

<sup>195</sup> Interview with Thom Robb, 24 August 1991. Cf. Pastor Robb's dream for a Bible camp cum resort: Ginny Carroll, "Coming Soon: Klub KKK: A Dream Resort for White Supremacists," *Newsweek*, 8 July 1991, p. 30.

<sup>196</sup> Donald Morrison, "In Illinois: A Festival of the Fed-Up," *Time*, 5 November 1979, pp. 8, 11.

The only one of the "hundreds" of 'mainstream' pieces on the CDPL deemed fit to reproduce today is the front page coverage accorded pastor Harrell by the *Lebanon Advertiser* on the occasion of his speech to a group at McKendree College which is not far from Lebanon (Illinois).<sup>197</sup> Undaunted, pastor Harrell adds an introduction:

Note: This reprint from the front page of the Wednesday, February 23, 1983, *Lebanon Advertiser* newspaper, Lebanon, Illinois, is an example of the type and kind of public speeches being made by the Christian Patriots Defense League, and more accurately reported than usual in this particular news account. Our purpose is to sound the warning of things to come and let events themselves produce the necessary growth and fruit of survival.

Taking an alternate tack, that of bringing Mohammad to the media mountain where the mountain has failed to come to Mohammad, pastor Karl F. Schott of Spokane, Washington, dedicates a good portion of his April, 1992 issue of *The Pathfinder* to a celebration of his having successfully placed a stand-by advertisement in the 23 March 1992 number of the *U. S. News and World Report*. The advertisement is reproduced in full, accompanied by the *U. S. News and World Report's* circulation figures, and encouraging letters from readers.<sup>198</sup> Regretfully, the subsequent issue of *The Pathfinder* reports receiving only some 700 letters, "a drop in the bucket when you consider the potential and the number of readers who may have read our ad."<sup>199</sup>

This sealed environment of newsletters, speaking engagements, Kingdom conferences, etc., combined with the added pressures of perceived persecution by

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<sup>197</sup> Harrison Leon Church, "John R. Harrell Lays it on the Line in Speech at McKendree College," *Lebanon Advertiser*, 23 February 1983, p. 1.

<sup>198</sup> Karl F. Schott, "Reaching Out With the Gospel of the Kingdom By Way of U. S. News and World Report," *The Pathfinder* (May-1992), p. 2-4.

<sup>199</sup> Karl F. Schott, "From the Pastor," *The Pathfinder* (April-1992), p. 2. Even the figure of 700 seems highly exaggerated.

government authorities and such private interests as the ADL, may well create much of the atmosphere which fosters such antinomian developments considered earlier in this chapter as those which took place with James Ellison's CSA compound, and similar events in Michael Ryan's Rulo, Nebraska encampment. Even lacking such high drama, it can be safely posited that no radical subculture adapts its goals to the dictates of pragmatism in an atmosphere of isolation or persecution. Ideas unchallenged with rational counter-argumentation tend to take on a life of their own, and much of the revolutionary violence of the Identity movement in the 1970s may be attributed to the combination of this isolation and the national atmosphere of polarization which came in the wake of the 1960s and early 1970s.

This split had dramatic repercussions within the Church of Israel. The flashpoint took place in 1976, when Buddy Tucker, a Baptist minister from Knoxville, Tennessee, held sessions at the Church of Israel which "injected militancy into the Church...[however] The major body of the congregation never bought the militant case, and their stability and perseverance saved the Church." There is some irony in this, for Buddy Tucker had come to Schell City at pastor Gayman's invitation to attend a Kingdom Conference which the Mormon faction opposed. In short order, the disagreement escalated to a confrontation, culminating on 2 June 1976 with Dan Gayman, Buddy Tucker and others entering the church which had been lost as a result of the court case sporting a banner of the organization to which both Tucker and Gayman belonged, "The National Emancipation of our white Seed."<sup>200</sup> In the ensuing confrontation, a large number of policemen and state Highway Patrolmen entered the building, arresting both Dan Gayman and Buddy Tucker, among others.<sup>201</sup>

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<sup>200</sup> *The Battle Axe N.E.W.S.* was the organ of this organization.

<sup>201</sup> Dwain A. Jenista, "The Church of Christ at Halley's Bluff," pp. 16-18.

In the wake of this arrest, Dan Gayman must have begun to rethink his position. The demonstration had accomplished nothing save to incur further legal fees. Indeed, the fanciful uniform adopted by Gayman and Tucker for the action, described by the Nevada Herald as "a white uniform, with knee length storm trooper boots, and an empty pistol holder and belt slung over over one shoulder,"<sup>202</sup> could not have brought about a desirable public effect. And from pastor Gayman's recollections noted above, there appears to have occurred in the course of this imbroglio an attempt by Tucker to "steal" Dan Gayman's congregation by preaching ever greater militancy. Whatever the precise circumstances however, the seeds of discord, planted in the 1960s, "manifested the fruit of what was learned in the 1960s. These seeds were manifested in militancy at the Church of Israel. They crested in 1976, and then lessened."

The white supremacist constellation was, by the 1980s, bitterly divided against itself,<sup>203</sup> with the activist/quietist split over the issue of violence the immediate point at issue. How that issue was resolved, particularly in the Identity churches, was very much a product of hermeneutics, the interpretation of inerrant text. As it happened, no two major Kingdom figures precisely agreed on the specific results of this hermeneutical endeavor--small surprise given the large areas of doctrinal disagreement among Kingdom ministers. Dan Gayman's understanding of Kingdom doctrine, therefore, was of key importance to the choices made by the Church of Israel.

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<sup>202</sup> Ibid., p. 18, quoting *The Nevada Herald*, 6 June 1976.

<sup>203</sup> The level of viciousness and paranoia infecting the White supremacist constellation in that period can be viewed in the unpublished "Deguello Report," an incredible document circulated among right wing figures in the late 1970s. Possibly the product of Minuteman founder Robert DePugh, the report included by name most of the leading figures and groups of every facet of the far right wing of the day, accusing each of being secret communists taking part in a communist conspiracy, of being secret Jews involved in a Jewish conspiracy, of being secret homosexuals involved in a homosexual conspiracy, or in most cases a combination of the three. Anonymous, "The Deguello Report," unpublished, privately circulated document, 1976. DePugh is currently in federal prison on a charge of possession of child pornography.

3. Tracing the doctrinal elements of the Church of Israel would require a volume length analysis in itself. Church of Israel theology is extraordinarily complex, involving both intrinsic and extrinsic meanings of biblical text, overlaid with such secondary source material as Arthur Koestler's *The Thirteenth Tribe*, *The Talmud Unmasked*, and more. A further complication arises from the fact that COI doctrine, as with Kingdom theology generally, is in a state of flux, subject to periodic reexamination. Indeed, so democratic is this spirit of biblical inquiry, that adherents are invited in church services and via the tape ministry to offer rebuttal to pastor Gayman's conclusions. Thus, even so basic a tenet of racist Kingdom doctrine as the belief that the Jews are the the satanic offspring of Eve and the Devil, represented most often by the snake in the garden of Eden, is according to pastor Gayman subject to review.<sup>204</sup> However, given these difficulties, it remains possible to trace the primary tenets of COI theology as they apply to the activism/withdrawal modes of political action.<sup>205</sup> These points will center on creation theory, analysis of contemporary society as viewed in the context of millennialist beliefs, and the 'theology of violence'.

Church of Israel theology holds with the majority of Identity theorists that Adam was neither the first created being,<sup>206</sup> nor even the first biped which God placed on the

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<sup>204</sup> Interview with Dan Gayman, 9-11 December 1991.

<sup>205</sup> The most concise, if somewhat dated, compendium of COI beliefs is Church of Israel, "Articles of Faith and Doctrine," booklet published by Church of Israel, Schell City Missouri, 10 January 1982.

<sup>206</sup> A minority of Identity theorists reject pre-Adamism and the racialism which flows from pre-Adamite belief. Raymond Bray of the Lord's Work Inc. in Austin, Kentucky for example, holds that, on the basis of Genesis 10 coverage that in the aftermath of the deluge, the survival of pre-Adamist beings would be impossible. These views are set out at length in Raymond Bray, "Perils of PreAdamic Man," and Raymond Bray, "The Origins of the Races," undated, privately circulated studies from the Lord's Work, Austin, Ky.

earth. Rather, other races were created first,<sup>207</sup> each in its own place, but Adam was the first Caucasian,<sup>208</sup> the only culture bearer, and the sole Trichotomous creation, that is, possessing the attributes of body, soul (mind) and spirit. In this, Adamic man is like unto

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<sup>207</sup> This pre-Adamite theory is not unique to Identity. In its earliest formulations, pre-Adamism can be traced to the second century C.E., in the Christian-pagan polemics of the time. In its modern form, however, pre-Adamism bears a striking similarity to the development of Christian Identity, which today is the last surviving redoubt of literal pre-Adamist belief. Formulated by the Frenchman Isaac La Peyrère in his *Men Before Adam* (London: 1656), this theory held that the Bible was in fact the history of the Jewish people only (with Christians counted in this number in New Testament times), and that Adam and Eve were thus the progenitors of only one of the earth's many peoples. They were the last rather than the first human creations, with a number of pre-Adamic races already in existence at the time of Adam's creation. Interestingly, La Peyrère's appeal was strongly philo-Semitic, holding that through kindness and toleration, the Jews would of their own accord move to France, convert to Christianity, and under the leadership of the French king, usher in the millennium. Nineteenth century formulations of pre-Adamic theory, however, were adopted primarily in America to support theories of race, arguing for the superiority of Caucasian Adamic man. This mirrored the transformation of the philo-Semitic appeal of Anglo-Israelism which became over time the racist theology of Christian Identity. For an excellent recent consideration of La Peyrère's theory, see Richard H. Popkin, *Isaac La Peyrère (1596-1676): His Life, Work and Influence* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1987). How directly La Peyrère's ideas influenced Richard Brothers in his earliest formulations of what would evolve into Anglo-Israelism is unknown. See Popkin, *Isaac La Peyrère (1596-1676)*, p. 128.

<sup>208</sup> The racial identification of Adam is key to the Identity abhorrence of interracial marriage. The racist expression of pre-Adamic theory in contemporary Identity which is shared by the Church of Israel, is put most clearly in a pamphlet written by the late Identity preacher Sheldon Emry which is widely distributed in Identity circles today:

Adam and Eve were created 6,000 years ago...All other races are much older...They are the humans of Genesis 1:26-28 who were commanded to overspread the earth whereas Adam's offspring began in a geographically limited area. The intelligence and morals of these other peoples are substantially below those of the descendants of Adam and Eve.

Marriages between the Adamites (sons of God) and the pre-Adamites (daughters of men) (Gen. 6:1-2) brought on the Noachic flood to destroy their mongrel offspring in that area.

As before Noah and Babel and as in ancient Israel, Adamites' mixing with pre-Adamites always brings in heathen religions, witchcraft, sex perversion, poverty, drugs, and every abomination known to man or God. Any city or nation where the dark, mixed-bloods live is proof of this.

Sheldon Emry, "God and Lincoln on Negro White Marriages," pamphlet distributed by Virginia Christian Israelites, Roundhill, Va.: n.d., pp. 2-3, 6.

a trinitarian God, and is thus created in his image with the mission of dominion over the other races who "...will receive their blessings through the race of Adam!"<sup>209</sup> The Jews represent the only non-created race. Rather, the Jews were the result of the seduction of Eve by Satan, with the issue of the union, Cain, as the carrier of the seed of Lucifer. Put under a curse of eternal enmity from the seed line of Adam, the two seed lines, that of white Adamic man and the children of Satan, the Jews, "have been locked in conflict for the last six thousand years upon this earth."<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>209</sup> Dan Gayman, "The Holy Bible: The Book of Adam's Race," pamphlet published by the Church of Israel, n.d., pp. 2-5. CF. Dan Gayman, "All Races Did Not Descend From Adam," *Zions Watchman* 9 (August 1977), pp. 8-10. Pastor Gayman follows a long tradition of Identity belief in holding that God's call to his chosen race is a call to responsibility for, and love of, all other races, each of whom has their own blessings bestowed upon them by God. See Howard Rand, "The Servant People: A Brochure on Anglo-Saxon Identity and Responsibility," pamphlet distributed by Destiny Publishers (n.d.), p. 8.

<sup>210</sup> Dan Gayman, "The Fable of Eve and the Apple," *Zions Watchman* 8 (July 1977), pp. 11-12. Much of the racism in Identity circles follows the view that the non-White races over the course of time have fallen under the control of the Jewish conspiracy for world domination. A good formulation of this view is provided by the Otis B. Read Jr. of the Joppa Gospel Tabernacle and Kinship Ministries of Baltimore, Md.:

When Satan walked out of the Garden [after Eve's seduction] he knew he had won the first round in the age-lasting struggle with the "seed of the Adam." The pre-adamite civilization was already his and because the Lord God's highest order of creation had succumbed to his flattering lie {"Ye shall surely not die; For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God"} our inheritance must be won back and we wait millenniums before receiving it.

As the struggle between the two seeds [Adamites and Jews, the pre-Adamites posited as a separate creation] began, the Lord God commenced to raise up a line of righteous men to withstand the Serpent's seed and their godlessness who would keep alive the law of the Lord in the hearts and minds of those referred to as Preachers of Righteousness--preachers of the law of the Lord. Another son was born to Adam and Eve. This son renewed the righteous line cut off when Cain was used by 'our enemy' to break this righteous line by murdering his brother Able. Seth and his sons were foreordained of God to oppose the aggressive principles [of] the descendants of Cain who were integrating with the beast creation while being taught by the enemy of the Adamic line that "might makes right."



Pre-Adamism has been a staple of Identity theology for many years, and continues to be propagated by a number of Identity churches in addition to the COI. A good compendium of these beliefs may be found in the work of the late Spokane, Washington based Identity figure, Dr. Alexander Schiffner [1900-1979]. In a supplement to his 1961 tract "Pre-Adamic Man," Dr. Schiffner opens with a brief rendition of some pseudo-anthropological factoids purporting to demonstrate the dangers of race mixing.<sup>211</sup> Dr. Schiffner then proceeds to a consideration of the biblical highlights of pre-Adamic theory:

These Pre-Adamic beasts or creatures have hands (Genesis 9:5-6, Ex. 19:12-13). They have feet (Ezekial 29:11). Animals have paws or hoofs. They were servants of the Israelites and they ate grapes and olives (Ex. 23:10-11). The beasts stood at the head of all inferior animals for wisdom and understanding. He walked erect. He was endowed with the gift of speech and reason. Satan took over the body of the beast and seduced our first parents. Today we have a repeat performance of the seduction in the garden of Eden. The non-Christian is persuading the Christian to yield to them; in other words, the soul yielding to the flesh. God means for our souls to yield to the spirit. The race riots are part of this plan to cause the Christian to non-Christian (...Isaiah 65:11).<sup>212</sup>

But who is Adamic man today? For Dr. Schiffner:

If the Adamic man was created in the image of God, he was God's chosen to lead and guide (direct) in righteousness and obedience to God, all other races. Since he failed, and later Israel and Judah also failed, God is therefore calling out a tried and proven people from ALL races to rule with him over ALL races. Israel's seed is sown among the nations until they are brought into their own land. This land is America. The judgements in the Bible for Israel

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"God Strikes Back at the Serpent's Cunningness," *News & Views* (12 January 1992), pp. 3-4.

<sup>211</sup> For an in-depth consideration of the historical development of racist anthropology, see George W. Stocking, Jr., *Race, Culture and Evolution* (New York: Free Press, 1968).

<sup>212</sup> Dr. Alexander Schiffner, "The Origin of the Races: Does the Word of God Give Us Light on the Race Riots?" Supplement to "Pre-Adamic Man" (1961), p. 3.

and all races are for us. This "time of Jacobs trouble" is for us...<sup>213</sup>

For:

God created all races for his glory (Rev. 4:11) and through Lord Jesus Christ He invites all to come and partake of His grace and partake of His Holiness...

The purpose of all races was designed to be a God-given test to all (Luke 2:34-35). How we treat others reveals our inner being.<sup>214</sup>

The Jews in this Identity pre-Adamic view are not truly Israelites, they are the synagogue of Satan,<sup>215</sup> and they are believed to have dispossessed the true Israelites, the white race, from their identity, although they have failed to wrest from them the covenant relationship with God.<sup>216</sup> The COI however, as reflected in the Resolution quoted above, hold that the Jews should not be subjected to reprisals for this usurpation, and recently, COI doctrine has held that the Jews are rather to be admired:

Dare we as Christians condemn the Jews when we have failed to move forward in obedience to our God and keep His covenant law? Have we not lost our racial identity by default? Is it not true that our failure to keep the covenant law of the Old Testament enabled the Jews to fill this void and steal our inheritance?<sup>217</sup>

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<sup>213</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>215</sup> Revelations 2:9 and 3:9.

<sup>216</sup> Dan Gayman, "Jesus Christ Was Not A Jew," *Zions Watchman* 4 (April 1977), pp. 6-8.

<sup>217</sup> Dan Gayman, "Plain Talk to Sincere Christians," *Watchman* 4 (Fall 1991), p. 10.

Christian Identity leaders are unanimous in holding that they are premillennialists (Jesus will return before the thousand year epoch begins), but deny the doctrine of Rapture,<sup>218</sup> the belief that the elect will rise to meet Jesus in the air, and thus be spared the horrors of the seven year Tribulation period. In practical terms, these beliefs mandate the adherent to act decisively in this life to both assure eternal salvation among the elect of God, and more immediately, to survive the Tribulation period. For some, this logic mitigates towards political activism, while for others, withdrawal, and ultimately survivalism, becomes an attractive option. In either case, the adherent has no practical hope of escape from this world during the times of "Jacob's trouble." As it is impossible to separate the group's analysis of contemporary society from their millenarian beliefs, these will be examined together.

For the Church of Israel, in common with nearly all Kingdom believers, these are the worst of times. Dan Gayman's ministry has been from its inception centered on an apocalyptic analysis of contemporary American culture, and a powerful millenarian message of chiliastic hope.<sup>219</sup> The specific Signs of the End may vary according to the

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<sup>218</sup> Rapture is not a logical position for Dan Gayman, "if someone knocks on your door, you may open it, but would you go?" Interview with Dan Gayman, 9-11 December 1991.

<sup>219</sup> When asked, for example, how a premillennial ministry can rely so heavily on postmillennial texts, particularly those emanating from the Christian Reconstructionist camp, pastor Gayman replied,

"We are premillennial. Christ will come in the beginning of the millennium as only Divine intervention will bring about the Kingdom. Christ will rule the Kingdom himself. [While] ...we are content to say you fellas [Reconstructionists] can try, elect anyone, [adopt] postmillennial Reconstructionist philosophy, but you are all failing. Hold onto biblical principles, but you won't bring in the Kingdom...[yet] We believe in Luke 13:19, 'occupy until I come'...don't roll over and play dead, we exercise what influence we can...write a letter to a congressman if it will help."

Gayman in fact has voted in every election in his adult life. Interview with Dan Gayman, 9-11 December 1991. For the use of Reconstructionist texts, especially Gary De Marr's *God and Government*, hear the 2 hour tape series "The Christian View of Civil Government," 23 June 1986.

news of the day, but the conclusion is unvarying. The election of Jimmy Carter in 1976 for example, was posited as "the greatest disaster ever," and thus a prime sign of the End.<sup>220</sup> In the late 1970s, with the increasing radicalization of the Kingdom believers, *Zions Watchman* carried a column which presented the reader with the seven leading Signs of the day, modeled on the Seven Trumpets of Revelation motif. Based on a careful analysis of the news, these included in two typical months in 1977:

July, 1977<sup>221</sup>

1) The U.N. Genocide Convention; 2) the alleged construction of concentration camps throughout the U.S. to hold "Patriots"; 3) The invitation of Russian officials to observe American army maneuvers; 4) possible war in the Middle East; 5) "Trilateral [Commission]" restrictions on U.S. military exports; 6) a headline quoting a Jewish spokesman as fearing a new holocaust, quoting him to the effect that "...the Bible points out that Jews are the children of the devil..."; and 7) American civil defense plans.

November, 1977<sup>222</sup>

1) U.N. treaties on economic, social and cultural rights and on civil and political rights; 2) a water shortage in the western U.S.; 3) the Soviet acquisition of a laser rangefinder; 4) an estimate that whites will soon be a minority in the U.S. due to immigration and high non-

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<sup>220</sup> "America Speaks to Her People," *Zions Watchman* 1 (January 1977), pp. 9-13. Cf. the apocalyptic essay centered on the American entry into the Antichrist System in 1973: Dan Gayman, "America in the Hands of an Angry God," *Zions Watchman* 1 (January 1977), pp. 9-13.

<sup>221</sup> Dan Gayman, "Warning From the Watchman Standing in the American Watchtower," *Zions Watchman* 8 (July 1977), p. 16.

<sup>222</sup> Dan Gayman, "Warning From the Watchman Standing in the American Watchtower," *Zions Watchman* 12 (November 1977), p. 11.

white birth rates; 5) a survivalist call to store food; 6) forced busing and white urban flight; and 7) the Panama Canal Treaty.

A recent *Watchman* updates these signs. Current among them are race mixing, AIDS, drugs, sexual sins, abortion, the EEC Common Market, One Worldism (George Bush's New World Order phrase resonates negatively among millenarians from evangelical and fundamentalist backgrounds no less than for the white supremacist constellation),<sup>223</sup> the Mexican Free Trade Zone proposal, and general economic upheaval.<sup>224</sup>

This apocalyptic analysis of American society obviously calls for some response, and increasingly in recent years, that response has come in the form of withdrawal to the greatest possible degree from American society. Lacking the confidence to predict with any certainty the precise time of the End,<sup>225</sup> the COI has developed a fifty year plan, suggesting such practical steps as education, health care, food production and relocation, so as to simultaneously prepare for the End, yet plan for the future of the Kingdom believers' children in a supportive community setting.<sup>226</sup> These ideas are further developed in the same issue of the *Watchman* with specific plans for the Christian family and the Christian Church, stressing such elements as home schooling and home birthing,

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<sup>223</sup> See for example any of the works of California fundamentalist Chuck Smith or the forthcoming book, *The New World Order*, by televangelist Pat Robertson.

<sup>224</sup> Dan Gayman, "Personally...From the Editor," *Watchman* 3 (Summer 1991), pp. 14-15. These themes are reinforced in the cassette tape ministry. Hear for example, "The Divine Call to be a Separated People," 19 August 1989; "Apocalyptic Millenarianism," 17 August 1991; or "Remnant Response to the Gulf War," 30 January 1991. The cassettes are particularly valuable in that they center closely on text, and allow the listener some insight into the hermeneutical process.

<sup>225</sup> Interview with Dan Gayman, 9-11 December 1991.

<sup>226</sup> Dan Gayman, "The Fifty Year Plan for the Remnant of North America," *Watchman* 3 (Summer 1991), pp. 1-6.

opposition to state immunizations of children, refusal to acquiesce in the state licensing of ministers, etc.<sup>227</sup>

While the current emphasis of the Church of Israel is on withdrawal and self sufficiency, this trend is not absolute. Indeed, COI members work in both public and private sector occupations, vote, pay taxes, and participate in local activities. This trend is also, as we have seen, relatively new. The key events in turning Dan Gayman and the Church of Israel away from confrontation with secular authorities and towards quietism appear to have been the violent activities of the Order, and the Fort Smith sedition trial which followed in its wake. As pastor Gayman recalls today: "In the early 1980s, we watched the proliferation of violence surfacing in this country. When the Order committed its crimes, this was a signal event. This brought in people we couldn't identify with in any sense of the word." The proliferation of violence, especially in the American northwest, forced a choice which led to a change of course from the radicalism of the 1970s. This was motivated by both moral and pragmatic considerations. Morally, "it was not biblically in order for thievery and murder." He was afraid also that the COI would be seen as a "safe house" for these people.<sup>228</sup>

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<sup>227</sup> Dan Gayman, "Drawing Battle Lines," *Watchman* 3 (Summer 1991), pp. 19-22.

<sup>228</sup> It should be noted that a published account holds that Richard Scutari of the Order told Gayman of the activities of the organization, and received his blessing, as well as a promise to care for the families of Order members when, as was inevitable, they would be killed. See Kevin Flynn and Gary Gerhardt, *The Silent Brotherhood*, p. 305. In reply to this charge, Dan Gayman writes:

I was very stunned to read the information printed on page 300 of *The Silent Brotherhood* [paperback edition]. I had absolutely no knowledge whatever of any counterfeiting ring in the Pacific Northwest or anyplace else. And never did such a conversation about such take place between myself and Richard Scutari or anyone else, including Robert Mathews.

Undated letter to author, received 26 December 1991.

These events had a chilling effect on the white supremacist constellation,<sup>229</sup> with scores of witnesses hauled in to testify at the resulting Fort Smith, Arkansas trial, albeit more about their own activities than those of the defendants. Dan Gayman too was called, ostensibly to testify about the \$10,000 passed to him by the Order. Whatever the politics of Fort Smith, the event had the immediate practical effect of accelerating the move towards withdrawal which was already in process within the COI in the wake of the Buddy Tucker controversy. Tangible evidence of this move began with the 1982 resolution quoted above, and deepened with a series of complex scriptural studies based primarily on Romans 13 which mandated submission to civil authorities in all but the most extreme cases.<sup>230</sup> The violence/withdrawal debate between the COI and other elements of the white supremacist constellation can best be seen however, in the uproar which followed the publication of Richard Kelly Hoskins' *Vigilantes of Christendom*.

4. The Hoskins debate is instructive on a number of levels. All but invisible to the dominant culture, and in all probability completely fictitious,<sup>231</sup> the Phineas Priesthood

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<sup>229</sup> Hard feelings abound from this trial. At the time, Bob Miles wrote of Gayman: "What an evil looking witness he made! Unable to look at either the jury or the defense attorneys, he was a witness who defied respect. He admitted to receiving \$10,000 but denied receiving \$240,000 when Scutari re-crossed him! Gayman name and phone number on Order telephone log. Gayman ties to the Order beyond denial. His later orders to remove any Order prisoners from his church mailing lists questioned as self-saving gestures. Admits did not return Order monies to FBI until after they called upon him to do so." Bob Miles, *From the Mountain/Beyond the Bars...The Stars!!* combined issue (March-April 1988), pp. 10-11. That hard feelings persist, see Dan Gayman, "Kitchen Table Talk," *Watchman* 3 (Summer 1991), pp. 26-27.

<sup>230</sup> Dan Gayman, "Romans 13: A Primer in Government for Patriotic Christians," pamphlet from the Church of Israel, 1989; Dan Gayman, "Rebellion or Repentance: Which Way Modern Israel?," pamphlet from the Church of Israel, 1987; and Dan Gayman, "Christian Conscience Towards Government," pamphlet from the Church of Israel, 1988. Cf. the 4 hour cassette series, "The Bible and Civil Disobedience," 1 January 1989.

<sup>231</sup> It is conceivable that there may indeed have come into existence in recent years a group styling themselves the Phineas Priests. While life may imitate art, and vice versa, the strong version of the hypothesis, an order of avenging Christians carried on in an unbroken line of transmission from time immemorial, is simply inconceivable.

seems to have seized the imaginations of many in the post-Order activist camp precisely because they want so much for it to be true: a divinely inspired band of selfless believers, tracing their ancestry and mission back to time immemorial, the Phineas Priesthood carries on an ancient tradition of the elimination of the "enemies of God." A fanciful, imagined history, complete with an attention grabbing blurb on the cover,<sup>232</sup> the strange case of the Phineas Priests<sup>233</sup> provides a case in point of the ever more fantastic nature of the discourse in a sub-culture which has been closed off to the surrounding society.

In contrast to the *Turner Diaries*, *Vigilantes of Christendom* purported to be historical fact, and it was accepted as such. Dan Gayman's riposte was not long in coming:

While the author is very careful to never call for overt vigilante action, the implication throughout the book is very clear:...that the Phineas priest vigilante band is a legitimate part of the Christian faith...the flavor of the book is that these many historical vigilante actions are a natural response to laws that oppose God and scripture...This book is gradually finding a place on the shelves of hundreds of remnant homes, and its contents allow a fertile mindset to endorse vigilante activity. **The purpose of this exposition simply is to challenge the idea that there can be vigilantes in Christendom.**<sup>234</sup> [emphasis in original]

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The story of the Phineas Priesthood  
As the Kamikaze is to the Japanese  
As the Shiite is to Islam  
As the Zionist is to the Jew  
So the Phineas priest is to Christendom

233 Numbers 25.

234 Dan Gayman, "Can There be Vigilantes in Christendom?" *Watchman* 3 (Summer 1991), p. 7. It should be emphasized that Dan Gayman was not alone in his concern about the implications of Hoskins' work. Pastor Dave Barley of America's Promise Ministries in Sand Point, Idaho illustrates the dangers of the seductive call of the Phineas Priesthood dream in a cassette teaching: "Conquering the Leviathan (A Message to the Phineas Priests)," (February 1992):

...I have some mighty nasty letters...attacking me personally...calling me coward and deceiver and trying to turn Christians out there into milktoast Christians...the Gospel of Christ is more powerful than what you or I can imagine...I have a book here which was sent me recently. It is by...Maynard C. Campbell Jr...I don't know this man personally...but when I read through a



Pastor Gayman does not challenge the historicity of Hoskins' timeless band of zealots. Rather, basing himself on scripture, with some assistance from *Black's Law Dictionary*, the 'Priests' are challenged both as to the biblical authority for their mission, and upon the practical impact that such a movement would have on the families of these

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book like this that tells Christians out there how to kill Christians, how to kill judges, how to kill police officers, how to kill any of their enemies through various poisons and mixtures and methods and techniques that he has talked about in his book and the foul language that he uses and the anger and the bitterness that he has and is presented in his book. This man is a very dangerous enemy of our people...I love you people, I don't want you to be misled...I don't hate this man and I don't have any anger or animosity to this man, but he is a deceiver...and he is gonna get a lot of people in a lot of trouble...and these banners or whatever you want to call them were sent in with it...notice what it says, 'Phineas Priest,' so you can sew it on your shoulder or jacket...or hat and let anybody know that you are Phineas Priests...He wants people to go out there and take care of his enemies...It's dedicated to his enemies...judge so and so, judge so and so...prosecutor so and so. He lists their name, he lists their address, he lists their phone numbers.

After going through a number of other local officials named in the Campbell book, pastor Barley quotes the text directly:

These dirty maggots unjustly, unlawfully, conspired and acted to deprive me of my reputation, property, liberty, and almost my life when they knew I had broken no law. Furthermore, should anything happen to me by any branch of government, you can be sure these perverts played a role whether commitment, indictment, incarceration or demise. I sincerely pray that I can bear moral responsibility for their premature arrival at the fires of hell which they richly deserve.

Pastor Barley then quotes from other recent cards which he has received, including one urging the immediate extermination of all "gay, queer sodomite faggots," signed by an individual who gives his name (pastor Barley declines to share it) and styles himself a CIA agent and Propaganda Minister of the New World Order [which sounds suspiciously like Mark Margoian, an inveterate crackpot from Waukegan, Illinois]. Pastor Barley concludes by thanking God that most Kingdom believers are too fat and choked with cholesterol to entertain serious notions of urban combat, and obliquely praises the ADL sponsored anti-paramilitary training legislation for taking away even the fantasy of violent action from the would-be Phineas' of the world. After all, violence can never overcome the Enemy--he is too strong. Wait, pray and prepare for the glorious day of His return!

self-appointed elects. The key text here is 1 Samuel 15:23, "Vigilante action by whatever name it is called is still rebellion, and rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft."<sup>235</sup>

**Since Phineas was not a private citizen and did not seek to circumvent God-ordained authority in the execution of judgement, we conclude that there are no grounds for using Phineas as the case law by which private citizens commit acts of violence.** <sup>236</sup> [emphasis in original]

No Christian in good conscience can become a vigilante, take the law into his own hands, and execute vengeance out of the barrel of a gun or with a fist. Many good young men have tried this in recent years, and today, they waste away in prison while their children are left as orphans for the welfare state to care for.<sup>237</sup> In the meantime, the teachers who guided them into this unChristian behavior are living a quiet and peaceful life, far removed from the filth, noise, and moral rot of the prisons where their students are warehoused.<sup>238</sup>

Needless to say, these views were not well received in many quarters of the white supremacist constellation, forcing pastor Gayman to reformulate his arguments at greater length.<sup>239</sup> The source of some of the more vehement objections can be inferred by the appended section attacking the Posse Comitatus by name.<sup>240</sup> And here stands the level of the current internal debate between those counselling revolutionary activism and those

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<sup>235</sup> Dan Gayman, "Can There be Vigilantes in Christendom?" *Watchman* 3, p. 9.

<sup>236</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>237</sup> There are now organizations actively soliciting donations for imprisoned white supremacists: the Patriot's Defense Foundation of Houston, Texas; and the Family Assistance Project of Fultondale, Alabama. The Houston organization is heavily publicized in pastor Earl Jones' newsletter, *The Christian Crusade for Truth Intelligence Newsletter*. On the Family Assistance Project, see the newsletter of Richard Snell's Last Call Ministries, *The Seekers* (April 1991), p. 2.

<sup>238</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>239</sup> Dan Gayman, "Can There Be Vigilantes In Christendom?" pamphlet from the Church of Israel, 1991.

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

urging progressive withdrawal from the dominant culture. Both views are resonant of the primary choice faced by millenarian movements throughout history. It is in the white supremacist constellation a debate which is inherently dynamic--no position is final and immutable--and as it is conducted in the vacuum of the movement's own isolation, it will remain volatile--subject to sudden and apparently irrational eruptions.

5. In conclusion, it can be safely posited that the Church of Israel fits comfortably into the Christian Identity component of the white supremacist constellation. While the political behavior of the Church has been moderated considerably in recent years, the essentially racist doctrines of the Church, based on pastor Gayman's interpretation of Kingdom theology, will remain intact for the foreseeable future.

The Church of Israel manifests to a greater or lesser degree each of the seven ideological factors suggested as typical of the white supremacist constellation. The Golden Age is held to have been in the pre-constitutional period of American history; the perception of a Jewish theft of culture (of the Israelite Identity) is a central COI doctrine; scripturalism is the basis for every pronouncement of the COI; the Church manifests a strongly manichaeian view of the world, resulting in a conspiratorial view of history, and a self-image of the adherent as a member of a much-persecuted 'righteous remnant;' and ultimately, a millenarian view of history which sees an apocalyptic climax of history as imminent, and offers a defined chiliastic vision to the adherent.

That chiliastic vision may make a fitting ending for this examination for, as with so much in the white supremacist constellation, when the dominant society becomes repugnant to the believer, when a culture is perceived as having no place for the adherent or his way of life, and when the very direction of history takes on the appearance of inevitable and final degeneration; what then is left but the age-old dream?

Every race was created by Yahweh and was pronounced very good (Genesis 1:31). Every race bears the original design of God in skin

color and all other unique qualities established by the act of creation. The Christian view must be that every race has its particular life purpose in the plan of God. Moreover, it must be true that what God created perfect in the beginning will be a part of His Kingdom design in the end. We believe that every race as created in its pristine original design will be resident within the Kingdom when Jesus Christ rules this earth. Every race will occupy that portion of the earth assigned to them by their God. There can be no hatred for the various races that Yahweh has created and placed upon His earth.<sup>241</sup>

### A Tentative Conclusion

Just as the Church of Israel appears to be moving toward a more pragmatic theological orientation, there appears to be in the dynamism of the Identity Christian churches some faint preliminary indications of even greater changes to come. These changes are as yet small, involving at best isolated pockets of adherents. Thus, this chapter will close on a note of speculation, based as yet on the thinnest of evidence, centering on the possibility that the Noahide movement considered above which has made some inroads within Christian Identity may continue to attract a following. There in fact appears to have been over the last several years a slow but steady polarization within the ranks of the Identity movement, with many adherents turning away from the racialism and anger so characteristic of Christian Identity in recent years. Part of that drift, ironically enough, appears to be towards an embrace of a Noahide or Noahide-like belief system. It is a movement which was hastened by the presidential signing of Public Law 102-14, but as we have seen, it was a movement which pre-dated the adoption of this law. Conversely, there appears to be a counter-trend towards increasing radicalization stemming from the success of such violent appeals as those of Richard Butler's Aryan Nations Church in recruiting prisoners to the cause.

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<sup>241</sup> Dan Gayman, "The Bible Case Against Miscegenation," *Watchman* 3 (Spring 1991), p. 22.

How successful pastor Butler has been in this effort may be seen in the experience of pastor Raymond Bray of the Lord's Work Identity ministry in Austin, Kentucky. Pastor Bray, it will be recalled, was despite his powerful anti-Semitic message conciliatory in matters of race, insisting that racial minorities in America be treated as guests in line with the teachings of Exodus 22:21 and 23:9.<sup>242</sup> Pastor Bray writes:

...I am very much aware of the hatred that prevails in most of the so-called "Identity" groups; much of it has been directed at me at one time or another. I usually get three letters from...[prisoners]. The first one requests our paper and calls me "white Nationalist Brother." The second disagrees with just about everything they found in the American Ephraimite [The Lord's Work's outreach publication] and any other literature that they have received from us, and the third denounces me as a mentally retarded heretic and traitor to my race and demands that I stop mailing to them.

...[In November 1991] I began began getting requests for inclusion on our mailing list from prisoners all over the Northeast. Then one prisoner recommended that I state in the paper that I was part of Butler's bunch, so that I could become more popular among the prison population. I told him flatly that Butler was misleading people and how he was doing it. My popularity disappeared overnight after that; I almost never hear from a prisoner now. There seems to be a Nazi network within the prison system that puts [the] Bell System to shame.<sup>243</sup>

With this influx of violent rhetoric and the unappetizing prospect of an unequal and premature confrontation with the state, it is small wonder that in lieu of irrefutable evidence that the Tribulation is indeed upon us, there is a movement out of Christian Identity as it is presently constituted. We have seen that some adherents simply give up the belief system.

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<sup>242</sup> Raymond Bray, "The Strangers Among Us."

<sup>243</sup> Letter from pastor Raymond Bray, 24 February 1992. Pastor Bray's experience is far from unique. Many prison appeals have run afoul of the popularity of the radicalism of a Richard Butler or a Robert Miles. Ron Hand of the Odinist Study Center for example, reports the same phenomenon, as well as confirming the 'jungle telegraph' among prisoners: "I know the movement [in the prisons] well enough to be aware of the grapevine...inspite of dissension within the ranks, even rivals and opponents read and evaluate each others opinions." Letter from Ron Hand, 7 March 1992.

Others however, have taken a more rigorous approach to the Bible, with the result that a few former Identity adherents are following the Noahide path popularized by the former fundamentalist preacher J. David Davis. Consider for example, the implications of the following letters from former Identity adherents, one in Arizona and the other in South Africa. Both have formed congregations, and both seek to transcend the strictures of Christian Identity in search of a deeper level of involvement with the Bible, and thus with the spirit of "true Israel." In so doing, it is clear, these adherents are reaching beyond the limitations of Identity theology--limitations which are largely self imposed as a result of the perceived need to demonize the Jews who are widely believed to be literal descendants of Satan. In place of this rage directed at the Jews for the perceived theft of the divine covenant, this as yet small group of seekers appear to be in the process of attempting a deeper form of identification with the biblical Israelites than is enjoyed by either Identity Christians or secular Jews by establishing a radical new relationship to sacred text.<sup>244</sup> Consider then, this letter from Arizona:

...we practice neither Judaism nor Christian doctrine or dogma. We attempt to worship in the essence and substance (spirit) of the Hebrew text.

We teach Paleo (old) Hebrew, and by necessity the so-called "modern Hebrew" (Yiddish) which is in reality Assyrio/Chaldean, only because some of the scrolls were translated into the latter during the Babylonian captivity.

We also study the biblical Greek text of the New Testament. We without offense, accommodate many diverse beliefs and grant absolute liberty to others to hold their own interpretation and understandings, as was common practice before the Christian era...

We have seen a great diversity of beliefs in all religions, the so called "Christian Identity" is no exception. All religions are "mixed wine," (mingled with truth and fiction). The more mingled

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<sup>244</sup> This deeper relationship to text is precisely the factor that led J. David Davis on the quest that would culminate in his adoption of Noahide beliefs, and it is as well the path that led others of his acquaintance in the same direction. Pastor Davis observes as well, from his contacts with rabbinical teachers, much the same problems among secular Jews: "The Jewish community has gotten so locked into ceremony and tradition that they have been lost as well." However, "Judaism has retained its integrity in pure monotheism." Interview with J. David Davis, 12 March 1992.

its doctrines, the less tolerant it is of others. It ceases to seek truth and expends its total resources in defending its [sic] own doctrine or position. What is called the "Church" today is the "Mystery Babylon" which sets squarely between the world (worldly) and the Spiritual (Heavenly). The one who escapes from the world is ensnared by the churches. He will not be set free until he also escapes the church and its illusion of righteousness, and he himself comes to the Word which is Messiah...

Much of the Christian Identity doctrine is absolutely true, yet our Father is a respecter of "Obedience." Identity without obedience, is far short of a completed perfect work. To whom much is given, much is required. If you be the seed of Abraham, do the work of Abraham!<sup>245</sup>

Of another intellectual level, yet no less heartfelt, is the following missive from South Africa:

We are not of the groups believing the Identity message. We (rather I) once believed it too, but have renounced it completely. We too were once deceived by this lie which is freely spread by *Plain Truth* magazine,<sup>246</sup> and many of the Name believers<sup>247</sup> in the U.S.

It is totally un-Scriptural. It is born out of, and leads to, frank racial prejudice...

Shalom in Yahushua  
(who saves from all sin)<sup>248</sup>

How widespread are these movements out of Christian Identity is as yet impossible to tell. As to whether such a movement will take root and flourish, here too, it is

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<sup>245</sup> Letter from Shechem ben Yissacher, 4 December 1991.

<sup>246</sup> The voice of the late Herbert W. Armstrong's moderate Anglo-Israel appeal.

<sup>247</sup> Name believers, also known as Sacred or Holy name believers, are a sect founded in the late 1930s by C. O. Dodd. Elder Dodd founded in 1938 the Faith and Bible Tract Society (now located in Amherst, Ohio) as a vehicle for his newsletter, *The Faith*, founded a year earlier. The primary tenet of this group is necessity to rediscover in scripture the true name of God, thus eliminating all man-made accretions. Foot washing, tithing and strict dietary laws are also practiced. See the statement of belief published on page 2 of each issue of *The Faith* (now in its 55th edition). Cf. Gordon Melton, *Encyclopedia of American Religion*, 2nd Edition (Detroit: Gale Publications, 1987), p. 453.

<sup>248</sup> Letter from Ken Koster, 11 February 1992.

impossible to venture an opinion at this early date. But it should be born in mind that Identity Christianity in its modern, racist form is only about seven decades old.<sup>249</sup>

Before its transformation into a racist theology in the America of the 1920s, the heyday of the *Dearborn Independent's* International Jew series, and a period in which the *Protocols of Zion* were a serious source of debate throughout American Protestantism,<sup>250</sup> Identity's precursor, Anglo-Israelism, was if anything, a Philo-Semitic theology.<sup>251</sup> It is difficult to believe therefore, that the Identity movement of today is as static and unchanging as, say, the pre-Gorbachev Soviet Union was thought to be, and that it will for all time be a theology of racism.

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<sup>249</sup> Michael Barkun, "From British Israelism to Christian Identity: The Evolution of White Supremacist Religious Doctrine,"; J. Gordon Melton, *Encyclopedic Handbook of Cults in America* (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1986), pp. 53-61; and Jeffrey Kaplan, "The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel."

<sup>250</sup> Tim Weber, *Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), pp. 154-156, 185-191.

<sup>251</sup> Michael Barkun, "From British Israelism to Christian Identity: The Evolution of White Supremacist Religious Doctrine," ; and Jeffrey Kaplan, "The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel." Cf. Ruth Mouly, *The Religious Right and Israel: The Politics of Armageddon*, self-published monograph (n.d.), pp. 15-18.



## CHAPTER 3

### AN APOCALYPSE UNREMARKED: AN AMERICAN 'MILLENNIAL COMMUNITY' AND THE SEVEN LAWS OF NOAH

*He appointed judges throughout all the fortified cities of Judah, city by city,  
And said to the judges, Be careful what you do, for you judge not for man, but for the  
Lord, and He is with you in the matter of judgement. [2 Chron. 19:5-6]<sup>1</sup>*

#### Part I- Organizing for the End

##### Introduction

It has been said of millenarians throughout the ages that if one is seeking signs and portents heralding the imminent End of Days, one will surely not be disappointed in his or her search. That such certain and incontestable wonders will pass unremarked by the great mass of society is, from the vantage point of the adherent, hardly surprising. Indeed, this seeming blindness may be interpreted as further proof that the End is nigh.<sup>2</sup> Thus, it went largely unremarked when on March 20, 1991, President George Bush affixed his signature to a bill passed out of Congress as "A Joint Resolution To Designate March 26, 1991 As Education Day, U.S.A." Intended as a gesture to the influential Lubavitcher Movement

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<sup>1</sup> All biblical quotations in this chapter, unless otherwise noted, are taken from the *Amplified Bible* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondravan, 1965). The *Amplified Bible* appears to be most often used in conjunction with Strong's Concordance by the majority of Christian Identity theorists.

<sup>2</sup> Millenarian and messianic movements are invariably minority movements. This isolation from the mainstream society is in keeping with the self-definition of the adherents of such groups as members of a 'righteous remnant' or as 'watchmen.' The biblical sources for such a perception include Rev. 14:1, in which a righteous remnant of 144,000 will be spared after going through the Tribulation; and on the watchmen on the wall, Is. 62:6.

headquartered in Crown Heights, New York, it was an act which would have a powerful, if unintended, impact on several sectors of American millenarian thought.

This apparently inconsequential action was seized upon by two sets of adherents, the militantly philo-Semitic B'nai Noah or Children of Noah, and the bitterly anti-Semitic Christian Identity groups, as clear and incontestable proof of the imminence of the End. While at first glance a juxtaposition of these two apparently incongruous belief systems may seem fanciful, upon closer examination, they are inextricably linked in that at root, both groups base their appeals on the concept of covenant, and in particular, on the covenant relationship binding the Jewish people to God. For the B'nai Noah, the aim is to share in the covenantal relationship through what the movement has come to call "covenant plurality," or the acceptance of the 'gentile covenant' which they believe has been in effect since the time of the deluge and operates side by side with the Mosaic covenant of the Jewish people.<sup>3</sup> Identity Christians conversely, see themselves as the victims of the most monstrous theft of culture in recorded history: that perpetrated by the literal offspring of the Devil, the seed of Satan who today call themselves Jews and who by demonic guile have dispossessed the true children of Israel, the Anglo-Saxon and other European peoples, of the knowledge of their true covenantal heritage.<sup>4</sup> It is in the struggle to revive the dormant memories of the lost covenant relationships that the B'nai Noah and the adherents of Christian Identity may be analyzed in terms of what may fairly be called a millennial community:<sup>5</sup> a community shared with such centers of activism as the Lubavitcher

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<sup>3</sup> Covenant plurality is defined in the credo of the Institute of Judaic Christian Research. See *Researcher* (April 1989), back cover.

<sup>4</sup> For a good introduction to the tenets of Christian Identity, see J. Gordon Melton, *Encyclopedic Handbook of Cults in America*, pp. 53-61. For a capsule review of the concept of covenant in Identity theology, see Howard Rand, "The Servant People: A Brochure on Anglo-Saxon Identity and Responsibility," pamphlet distributed by Destiny Publishers (n.d.).

<sup>5</sup> For the purposes of this chapter, Christian millenarianism and Jewish messianism, the belief in the coming of a messianic figure whose advent will be accompanied by such phenomena as the full realization of the Law (*halacha*), the reconstitution of worship in the

Hassidim and the Jerusalem Temple Institute. This comes at a time when the Lubavitchers were in the throes of a messianic excitement unmatched since the 1840s, if not since the sixteenth century activities of Sabbatai Zevi,<sup>6</sup> and the Temple Institute is busily endeavoring to prepare the necessary implements for the rebuilding of the Third Temple. This millennial community, barely known to the dominant culture, interacts in a manner which serves to powerfully reinforce both the ideology and the eschatology of the groups involved.

This chapter will focus primarily on the interaction of two very different sectors of what might be termed an American millenarian/messianic community; the Noahide movement and Identity Christianity. Secondly, this chapter will focus on the process within the microcosm of Christian Identity by which millenarian leaders identify, interpret and suggest to their followers prominent signs of the End--suggestions which the 'laity' are free to accept or reject.

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Third Temple in Jerusalem, God's granting to man of a new Torah, and much more, will be considered together. This is in keeping with the scholarly practice of loosening these definitional requirements so as to consider the Abrahamic and non-Western traditions as a single analytical unit. Christian sources on the millennium were noted in Chapter 2, while the most accessible account of the multiple strands of Jewish messianic beliefs is Raphael Patai, *The Messiah Texts* (Detroit: Wayne State University, 1979). For the transformation of Jewish messianism into secular Zionism, see Yaacov Shavit, "Realism and Messianism in Zionism and the Yishuv," in Jonathan Frankel, ed., *Studies in Contemporary Jewry: An Annual IV* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 100-127.

<sup>6</sup> "Schneerson: 'Have no fear, Gulf crisis heralds Messiah,'" *Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 1 September 1990, p. 6; "Waiting for Messiah," *Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 9 March 1991, p. 13; "Footsteps of Messiah?" *Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 4 May 1991, p.4; "Announcing the Days of Redemption," *Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 5 October 1991, p. 13. The Lubavitcher position is set out in a full page ad titled "The Time for Your Redemption has Arrived," *Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 29 June 1991, p. 5. The 1840 messianic excitement stemmed from the efforts of the Gaon of Vilna to 'Count the End.' For a symposium on this event, see Richard I. Cohen, ed., *Vision and Conflict in the Holy Land* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985). On Sabbatai, see Gershom Scholem, *Shabbatai Zevi: The Mystical Messiah* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973).

## Identity Christians and the B'nai Noah: A Millennial Community?

### The Movements Defined

*Thus says the Lord of Hosts: In those days ten men, out of all languages of the nations, shall take a hold of the robe of him who is a Jew, saying, Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you. [Zechariah 8:23]*

Given the relative obscurity of both the Noahide movement and Identity Christianity, some background information is in order. Identity Christianity, discussed in its current form in Chapter II, is the American successor to Anglo-Israelism, a Christian sect whose greatest following was in the nineteenth century, but which continues in the form of the British-Israel World Federation to this day. It will be recalled that the central tenet of Anglo-Israelism is the belief that the ten lost tribes of Israel in fact migrated during the period of the Assyrian Captivity [c. 740-721 BC] over the Caucasus Mountains, where this remnant of Israel eventually became the forerunners of the Anglo-Saxon and other Germanic and Scandinavian peoples. Anglo-Israelism itself migrated across the Atlantic to reach Canada and America in the 19th century. It was in the United States in the 1920s that Anglo-Israel beliefs combined with the impact of world events ranging from the First World War and its aftermath to the Russian Revolution, and under the influence of such texts as the *Dearborn Independent's* anti-Semitic series and the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, Christian Identity emerged as a racist and virulently anti-Semitic doctrine. The key doctrinal elements underpinning this anti-Semitic belief system flow from somewhat idiosyncratic approaches to key passages of Genesis in which Eve's fall is accompanied by her seduction by Satan, in the guise of the snake, with the issue of this union, Cain, posited as the progenitor of a satanic seed line from which springs those that

the world has been duped into referring to as Jews today.<sup>7</sup> Put under a curse of eternal enmity with the Adamic seed line, posited here as Caucasians, these false Jews are explicitly denounced by Jesus for the "satanic counterfeit" that Christian Identity believers know them to be, based primarily on Rev. 2:9 and 3:9 ("those who say they are Jews but are not, but are a synagogue of Satan") and on John 8:44 ("You are of your father the Devil...He was a murderer from the beginning...and the father of lies and of all that is false.").<sup>8</sup>

Christian Identity in today's America has developed into a remarkably diverse belief system--so much so that it has yet to fully crystalize into a sectarian movement. Each Identity pastor undertakes for himself a process of biblical hermeneutics, deriving often strikingly divergent doctrinal formulations. This has resulted in a movement which can bring together under the banner of Christian Identity the revolutionary oratory and extreme racism of a Richard Butler, the quietism of a Dan Gayman or the outspoken denunciation of racism (while embracing anti-Semitism) of a Raymond Bray.<sup>9</sup>

The Noahide movement in its current form is far newer, and like Christian Identity, it has yet to fully coalesce into a sectarian form. Autonomous B'nai Noah groups exist

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<sup>7</sup> See Sheldon Emry, "The Seven Sins of Canaan," transcript of 1970 sermon published by the Lord's Covenant Church (Phoenix, Az.: 1986); and Sheldon Emry, "The Heirs of the Promise," (n.p., n.d.).

<sup>8</sup> It is important to note that Christian Identity is not alone in positing the Jews as the products of a satanic seed line following from the illicit union of Eve and the snake in the Garden of Eden. A widely popular Pentecostal revival preacher and faith healer of the 1950s, William Branham [d. 1965], came to the same conclusions, and pointed in particular to John 8:44 as evidence. Interestingly, Branham, like many Identity figures, in his later years came to espouse certain occult beliefs and practices, from pyramidology to the belief that through the "Third Pull" the power of the mind could create matter. Branham in fact is buried in a pyramid shaped tomb. For an introduction to this fascinating figure, see "William Branham: An American Legend," pamphlet issued by the Chicago based magazine *Cornerstone* (1988). Cf. David E. Harrell Jr., *All Things Are Possible: The Healing and Charismatic Revivals in Modern America* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1975).

<sup>9</sup> Jeffrey Kaplan, "The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel."

throughout the United States, and particularly active centers of B'nai Noah belief may be found in Belgium and the Netherlands. This chapter however, will concentrate on the movement's most active American epicenter: that gathered around such leaders as Vendyl Jones, J. David Davis and Jack Saunders and the web of Jewish figures from the Orthodox rabbinate and various Israeli based religio-political groupings who cooperate with these leaders. The origins of this facet of the B'nai Noah may be traced only to August, 1988, when Vendyl Jones, a former Baptist minister from Arlington, Texas, sent out an appeal to some thirty rabbis and Jewish scholars,<sup>10</sup> although for several years previous to this, Jones, David Davis and Jack Saunders had talked of forming a movement along vaguely Noahide lines.<sup>11</sup>

This appeal however, capped a long spiritual journey which, according to Vendyl Jones, saw him resigning from his church in 1956 to pursue an intensive course of study in Judaism and the Hebrew language. By his own account and that of his closest followers, he proceeded from the most basic levels of *Bar Mitzva* studies to the Department of Judaica at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, kabbalistic studies under rabbi Haim Shivilli, through Hassidic studies in the Lubavitcher Yeshiva Chabad, both in Jerusalem.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Vendyl Jones, "A Prince Has Fallen in Israel," *Researcher* (October-November-December 1990), p. 6; Vendyl Jones, "Establishing B'nai No'ach," *Congregation Kerem B'nai No'ach* 1 (February 1990), p. 1. The former source puts the date of the appeal as August, 1988 and states that only two replied, while the latter gives August, 1989 and claims that almost half responded positively. It is possible that these were two separate mailings a year apart.

<sup>11</sup> Interview with J. David Davis, 12 May 1992. These discussions took place between 1985 and 1987, considering and rejecting such titles as God-fearers or fearers of heaven.

<sup>12</sup> Ed Stribling, "1991 Retrospect," *Researcher* (February 1992), p. 16. Cf. the hagiographic treatment of Vendyl Jones by Richard Fry in an advertising flyer for Jones' book, *Will the Real Jesus Please Stand?* Fry claims, among other things, that Vendyl Jones served as a model for the Indiana Jones character in the film, "The Raiders of the Lost Ark," predicted in 1961 the fate of Israel through the Six Day War, and in his spare time, helped the Israeli Defense Ministry to develop the Merkavah tank. Rather than rest on the seventh day however, Jones' primary task today is archaeological: the recovery of the ashes of the red heifer so that the Third Temple can be built. On the effects of success in this endeavor, see Vendyl Jones, "The Whole World Will Change When the Ashes Are Recovered," *Researcher* (April 1989), p. 30. So important is this quest that the Institute of

Whatever the truth of this hagiographic odyssey, in a theme that will constantly recur in B'nai Noah circles, Vendyl Jones noted in early 1990 his surprise that when he journeyed to Israel to consult Torah scholars on his dream for a Noahide movement, he was informed that certain rabbis had by 1986, at virtually the same time that Jones first conceived of the idea, been independently visited with the same vision.<sup>13</sup> Whatever the genesis of the B'nai Noah idea, the 1986 meetings in Israel resulted in a definite proposal for the formation of a movement based on the Noahide covenant. The plan, Vendyl Jones is at some pains to point out, was at the initiative and under the direction of the rabbinical authorities.<sup>14</sup>

The first phase of this plan dealt with the establishment in Jerusalem of a Noah Institute. This early institutional model was later abandoned in favor of a plan worked out in 1992 in a Jerusalem meeting involving Rabbis Manachem Burstin and Chaim Richman on the Jewish side, and J. David Davis and Jack Saunders representing the B'nai Noah, with the resulting institution officially dubbed The World Center of B'nai Noah Studies.<sup>15</sup> The Vendyl Jones plan however, is notable for the ambition and vision which lay behind

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Judaic-Christian Research has adopted a drawing of the *Kalal*, the urn of the ashes, as its logo. Ibid., p. 24. The quest for the *kalal* may have inadvertently unearthed a find of great archaeological value in Vendyl Jones' discovery of what may be incense from the Second Temple period. "Christian Group May Have Found Second Temple Incense," *Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 19 May 1992, p. 26. In evaluating the Vendyl Jones myth, it should be noted that some inconsistencies exist. A news report on the CBS Evening news which aired on 18 May 1992 portrayed Jones as something of a parody, pointing out that his claims to archaeological credentials were false, and that his alleged intimate relationship with the Israeli government were belied by that government's revoking his permit to dig in Israel. It might be noted as well as that Yeshiva Chabad is in fact not in Jerusalem, but on the outskirts of Tel Aviv, on the road to the airport.

<sup>13</sup> Vendyl Jones, "Establishing B'nai No'ach," *Congregation Kerem B'nai No'ach* 1 (February 1990), p. 3.

<sup>14</sup> Vendyl Jones, "What We Must Do Here," *Congregation Kerem B'nai No'ach* 1 (February 1990), p. 7.

<sup>15</sup> J. David Davis, "Is There Torah Among the Nations?: Foundation Laid For the 'World Center of B'nai Noah Studies,'" *The Gap* (March-April 1992), pp. 1-2; "New B'nai Noah Center to Open in Jerusalem," *The Jewish Voice*, May 1992.

the formative period of the B'nai Noah. Activities of the original Institute would have included classes for gentile students taught by rabbis and Torah scholars, study tours and short term seminars, interchange between Jews and gentile scholars, research on the responsibility of Jews to the nations as well as to bring Jews alienated from the tradition back to the Torah, educational services including printed and audiovisual materials for gentile laymen and clergymen (including local referrals to authorities in the home area of the visitor), and work study opportunities in Israel.<sup>16</sup> Negatively, the Institute would decidedly not engage in "interfaith dialogue" or teach Christianity, prepare gentiles for conversion to Judaism, engage in any sort of missionary activity among Jews, associate with either anti-Semites or anti-Zionists, not teach gentiles more of the Torah than is halachically permitted, or promote social activities which may lead to intermarriage between Jews and gentiles (described as "the silent holocaust of assimilation").<sup>17</sup>

This early institutional model never got past the talking stage and was later abandoned in favor of a plan worked out in 1992 in a Jerusalem meeting involving Rabbis Manachem Burstin and Chaim Richman, J. David Davis and Jack Saunders, with the resulting institution officially dubbed The World Center of B'nai Noah Studies.<sup>18</sup>

The new World Center plan has already entered the unwieldy Israeli bureaucracy, with David Davis having submitted the necessary papers (and the \$2,000 filing fees) necessary to obtain tax exempt status.<sup>19</sup> Pending completion of the center, Noahide education in Jerusalem will be a highly decentralized affair, with several existing yeshivas

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<sup>16</sup> Yehoshua Friedman, "The Noah Institute," *Congregation Kerem B'nai No'ach* 1 (February 1990), pp. 5-6.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., pp. 6-7.

<sup>18</sup> J. David Davis, "Is There Torah Among the Nations?: Foundation Laid For the World Center of B'nai Noah Studies," *The Gap*, pp. 1-2; "New B'nai Noah Center to Open in Jerusalem," *The Jewish Voice*, May 1992; Interview with J. David Davis 20 May 1992.

<sup>19</sup> Interview with J. David Davis 20 May 1992.



already in the process of developing a special Noahide curriculum.<sup>20</sup> The World Center itself will be constituted under the direction of Chaim Richman, who also serves as the Director of Public Affairs of the Jerusalem Temple Institute. Overall policy will be set by an advisory council which will include David Davis, James Tabor, Jack Saunders and two others to be named later. The curriculum will center on the basic seven laws, the commandment to establish courts, and prohibitions against blasphemy, idolatry, illicit sexual relationships, murder, theft and eating the limb of a living creature, and will expand to the fields of ethics and law, stressing both positive and negative commandments.<sup>21</sup>

The B'nai Noah today have made remarkable strides. The key to the movement's progress may be attributed to the untiring efforts of its adherents. These include such figures as Vendyl Jones, J. David Davis, a former fundamentalist minister from Athens, Tennessee, Jack Saunders, a former Georgia minister, and James Tabor, a scholar of early Christianity from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Following the same hermeneutical process, all came to roughly similar conclusions about the history and nature of Christianity. Remarkably, there appears to have been a number of individuals coming to the same belief apparently independently throughout the United States, Great Britain, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Nigeria.<sup>22</sup> Nonetheless, the key figures seem to have been the troika of Vendyl Jones, Jack Saunders and the movement's most recognizable public face, J. David Davis.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Interview with J. David Davis, 12 March 1992; and *The Root and Branch Noahide Guide/1991-5752* (New York: The Root and Branch Ass. Ltd., 1991), pp. 57-14, for a selection of press accounts of the movement.

<sup>23</sup> Davis asserts in one printed version that he first heard of the Noahide movement from Vendyl Jones. "Church Drops Baptist Heritage to Study Judaism," *Los Angeles Times*, 25 May 1991. Elsewhere he asserts that this discovery was made during his own spiritual search. Interview with J. David Davis, 12 March 1992.

David Davis' path to the B'nai Noah began in the winter of 1973-1974 in a quest for the historical Jesus. This brought him to the Second Temple period. He found a *Mishna* and began to read it realizing that he needed to learn Judaism. In 1979-1980 he first ran across books on the Noahide Movement while engaged in a study of all 28 chapters of the Book of Acts. The most important of these texts were R. Harry Falk's *Jesus the Pharisee* which contained a letter by R. Jacob Emden on the 7 laws of Noah, and the *Seven Laws of Noah* by Aaran Lichtenstein.<sup>24</sup> The further he read, the further he and his core group of associates drifted from Christianity,<sup>25</sup> until today David Davis confidently predicts that the Noahide movement will have to ultimately supplant Christianity.<sup>26</sup> What then, are the tenets of this putative successor to modern Christianity?

The B'nai Noah are so named for the belief that the biblical flood destroyed all human life. Thus, we are all, literally, the children of Noah. A thirteenth century formulation offered by R. Jacob Anatoli, puts this belief best:

Since God destroyed all of humanity and preserved only Noah, mankind in general became known as the children of Noah. The one exception is the Jewish People, whose members are known as the children of Israel...[t]hrough Noah, God established a covenant in which He undertook never again to destroy the world by flood. In return, mankind was obligated never again to corrupt its ways. Thus, all men are members of a covenant with God, contracted on their behalf by Noah.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Harvey Falk, *Jesus the Pharisee: A New Look at the Jewishness of Jesus* (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), pp. 17-23; Aaron Lichtenstein, *The Seven Laws of Noah*, Second Edition, (New York: The Rabbi Jacob Joseph School Press, 1986). So important is this text to the movement that R. Dov Ber Haskelevich, a Lubavitcher Hassid whose primary outreach work is with the former Soviet Union via Radio Liberty, is in the process of having it translated into Russian for dissemination among Russian speaking gentiles. Interview with R. Dov Ber Haskelevich, 23 March 1992.

<sup>25</sup> Interview with J. David Davis, 12 March 1992.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Nahum Rakover, "Jewish Law and the Noahide Obligation to Preserve Social Order," *Cardozo Law Review* 12 (February/March 1991), pp. 1073-1074.

Thus, B'nai Noah beliefs flow from the proposition that the seven Noahide laws are fully binding on all non-Jews, and that only through obedience to these laws in the full knowledge that they are Divine imperatives can the B'nai Noah hope to have a share in the messianic life to come.<sup>28</sup> These laws comprise the minimal code of conduct demanded by God of all non-Jews according to God's covenant with the post-flood children of Noah.<sup>29</sup>

Negatively, the B'nai Noah have come to this belief system having rejected key elements of Christian dogma, in particular, the belief in the divinity of Jesus, and thus of the Trinity. Indeed, the B'nai Noah often refer to Christianity as "pagan Christianity."<sup>30</sup> Thus, much of the coverage that the movement has received in the popular press dwells in particular on some of the more extravagant gestures of the adherents (the removal of crosses and steeples from former church buildings for example); phenomena which are the product of the loss of belief in the divinity of Christ.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> The key, according to Maimonides, is that these obligations be undertaken not through human reason or morality, but in knowing submission to the dictates of God. Failing this submission, the Noahide is considered neither righteous nor wise. Ibid., p. 1077. In a strong counter-argument, R. Steven Schwarzschild suggests that the Rambam's view was that a Noahide who follows the Noahide precepts for reasons other than the belief that they were revealed to Moses is not to be considered righteous, but is to be considered wise (i. e., a 'sage'). The confusion in Schwarzschild's view is the result of corrupted texts. See Steven S. Schwarzschild, "Do Noachites Have To Believe in Revelation," in *The Pursuit of the Ideal: Jewish Writings of Steven Schwarzschild*, Manachem Kellner, ed., (Albany: SUNY, 1990), pp. 32-34.

<sup>29</sup> *The Root and Branch Noahide Guide* 1991-5752, p. 1.

<sup>30</sup> This is taken from conversations with B'nai Noah adherents and an internal letter written by one B'nai Noah figure which by request can not be further explicated. On the record, this is confirmed by the leading rabbinical intellectual light associated with the B'nai Noah, R. Israel Chait of Far Rockaway, New York. R. Chait was a student of the great Talmudist, R. Joseph Soloveitchik and is currently Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshiva B'nai Torah. Interview with R. Israel Chait, 13 May 1992.

<sup>31</sup> Interview with J. David Davis, 12 March 1992. David Davis asserts that this press coverage, while true, missed the point completely. These actions were not taken "out of protest, we did it out of conviction of the word of God." All "symbols of paganism, the cross, icons, etc., were removed out of spiritual conviction based on the word of God. "The removal of steeples was simply not the point." The most important of the press accounts was: "Tennessee Baptists Turn to Judaism for New Inspiration," *The Wall Street*

More to the point than these high profile gestures however, is the realization within the movement that the seven Noahide laws provide a convenient shorthand for far more complex subsets of laws,<sup>32</sup> the import and application of which must be undertaken by halachic experts--rabbis well versed in the Talmud and other sources of the Oral Law. Thus, the B'nai Noah must turn to the Orthodox rabbinate for authoritative rulings, as well as for day to day instruction.<sup>33</sup> This relationship, fraught with difficulties for the adherents and their rabbinical advisors alike, appears to aim at an idealized updating of the relationship which until the destruction of the Second Temple may have bound resident aliens (*ger toshav*) to the people of Israel.

### The Making of a Millennial Community

At first glance, it would be difficult to imagine two more diametrically opposed movements than the B'nai Noah and the adherents of Christian Identity. The former, after all, say of themselves:

The Noahides are strongly pro-Jewish, pro-Israel and encourage Jews to observe the Torah. Noahides fight Jew Hatred and actively oppose Christian missionary activities against Jews.<sup>34</sup>

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*Journal*, 20 March 1991. The sub-head on this article read: "Christian Fundamentalists Seek Roots of Their Faith: There Goes the Steeple." This formulation proved somewhat unfortunate, as even the Jewish press picked up on the steeple imagery: Tom Sawicki, "There Goes the Steeple," *The Jerusalem Report*, 25 July 1991.

<sup>32</sup> Aaron Lichtenstein, *The Seven Laws of Noah*. The primary emphasis of Lichtenstein's presentation is on the subsets of halachic laws encompassed by each of the seven Noahide commandments. Thus, in practice, Noahide Law is not dissimilar to the Mosaic code of 613 laws incumbent on Jews--particularly when those halachic laws dealing with Temple ritual are deleted pending the rebuilding of the Third Temple.

<sup>33</sup> This dependence is made explicit in J. David Davis, "Is There Torah Among the Nations? Foundation Lain in Jerusalem for 'The World Centre For B'nai Noah Studies'," pp. 1-3.

<sup>34</sup> "About the Noahide Movement," *The Gap* (January-February 1992), p. 7.

Conversely, a widely held Christian Identity formulation has this to say on the same subject:

Jesus did not practice the "religion of the Jews." He abhorred it. The religious beliefs taught in the synagogues of Judea during Christ's lifetime...Jesus condemned these as being "children of Satan." [Rev. 2:9 and 3:9]

Are you naive enough to believe that a religious book which encourages incest, such as the Sanhedrin volume of the Talmud does; or unnatural intercourse; or rape of non-Jews; or bestiality, as found in this filthy volume; do you believe that this could be the basis of Jesus' teaching? If you do, you are guilty of the vilest form of blasphemy.<sup>35</sup>

What could two such opposite movements have in common? Indeed, adherents of both belief systems would find the very act of comparison invidious, and what follows seeks to avoid either moral judgements or an advocacy of moral equivalence with regard to the beliefs of either group. Yet the B'nai Noah and Christian Identity see the world in remarkably similar ways--these are after all millenarian/messianic belief systems whose adherents see the present moment as pregnant with the possibility of the imminent End. It is therefore not surprising to see a number of ideological convergences linking these groups within the context of a recognizable millenarian community. Of these linkages, the following factors would appear to be among the most important.

First, both sets of adherents see themselves as heirs to an ancient religious tradition. For the B'nai Noah, the God-fearers, an apocalyptic gentile sect based on Noahide beliefs which may have existed in the earliest days of Christianity (Acts 10) are posited as spiritual forerunners.<sup>36</sup> Identity Christianity takes its very name from an identification of the

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<sup>35</sup> Jack Mohr, "Exploding the Chosen People Myth," self-published pamphlet (n.d.), pp. 10-11. Lt. Col. Mohr is no innovator, and is an excellent source for beliefs which have come to be widely held in Christian Identity.

<sup>36</sup> A good introduction to this controversy may be found in the September, 1986 issue of *Biblical Archaeology Review* XII (September/October 1986). Arguing against the

Caucasian peoples with the lost 10 tribes of Israel. Similarly, both groups offer dramatic yet ill defined eschatologies, positing the End of Days as imminent and claiming key roles for the group in history's final drama.<sup>37</sup> For the B'nai Noah, the precise nature of the chiliastic period is no more defined than it is within the Jewish sources.<sup>38</sup> Yet there is no

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existence of the sect, Robert A. MacLennan and A. Thomas Kraabel, "The God-Fearers--A Literary and Theological Invention," (pp. 46-53), base their case on the excavation of diaspora synagogues, none of which provide evidence of a God-fearers sect, and on the ambiguity of the Greek term '*theosebies*,' which has been translated as God-fearers. Taking the opposite view, Robert F. Tannenbaum, "Jews and God-Fearers in the Holy City of Aphrodite," (pp. 46-53), argues that '*theosebies*' is an unambiguous term denoting only God-fearers, and points to an inscription recently unearthed in the ancient Greek city of Aphrodisias as evidence of the existence of the sect. Louis H. Feldman, "The Omnipresence of the God Fearers," (pp. 47-69), examines a wide range of sources to argue for the sect's existence. Cf. Tom Finn, "The God Fearers Reconsidered," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 47 (1985), pp. 75-84, for a cautious support for the historicity of the God-fearers.

James Tabor is convinced of the reality of the God-fearers on historical grounds. Moreover, he calls himself a modern day God-fearer in terms of his own religious outlook. Interview with James Tabor, 23 March 1992 and discussion on 10 May 1992. Cf. James D. Tabor, "B'nai Noah: The Reappearance of the God-fearers in our Time," unpublished, privately circulated article (1990). On the specific connection of the God-fearers to the current B'nai Noah, see James Tabor, "The 7 Noahide Laws: What Every Gentile Should Know," *The Jewish Press*, 18 January 1991. A strong endorsement of the God-fearers as an historical reality is offered by Ephraim E. Urbach, *The Sages* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987), p. 543: "The fact of the dissemination of Israel's faith among the Gentiles in the Jewish Diaspora and of the resultant large numbers of proselytes and 'fearers of the Lord' in the countries of the Roman Empire and in the area of Hellenistic civilization is well known..."

<sup>37</sup> A primary difference is that Christian Identity, having rejected the doctrine of Rapture, see the End in strongly apocalyptic terms. B'nai Noah literature provides no indication of interest in apocalyptic scenarios.

<sup>38</sup> On these multiple strands of belief, see again Raphael Patai, *The Messiah Texts*. For a good example of the disuse into which questions of eschatology, chiliasm, and to a lesser extent, messianism, have fallen within current mainstream rabbinic Judaism, see the embarrassed apologetic offered by Arthur A. Cohen, "Eschatology," in *Contemporary Jewish Religious Thought*, Arthur A. Cohen and Paul Mendes-Flohr, eds., (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1987), pp. 183-188. Cf. in the same volume, the argument that, in line with the 19th century development of reform Judaism, messianism should be seen by modern Jews as an historical process rather than in terms of a meta-historical redeemer: R. J. Zwi Werblowski, "Messianism," pp. 597-602. For a ferocious defense of traditional Jewish messianic beliefs centering on the figures of Rabbis ben Joseph and ben David, see leading Gush Emunim personality R. Moshe Levinger, "From Messiah-Son-of-Joseph to Messiah-Son-of David." Interview translated from *Nekuda*, (July 22, 1988). *New Outlook*, (September/October, 1988). The themes alluded to by R. Levinger in this interview are presented at some length by his own teacher (and the primary authority revered by senior Gush Emunim personalities today, R. Tzvi Yehuda HaCohen Kook, the

mistaking the adherents' sense of the messianic excitement that the movement generates, nor the global importance<sup>39</sup> of the movement to these times:

Frankly, what is happening in our day is somewhat new. We are in a new situation; one which we hope, through the grace of haShem (A term used when referring to the sacred name: ha=the, Shem=name), will lead to messianic times...This is in the spirit of Isaiah 2 and 11, which tells of the nations coming to Jerusalem to learn the "Way of Hashem," leading to messianic times when the earth is filled with the knowledge of haShem as the waters cover the sea (Zachariah 14:9)...all nations can be taught of God and learn the way of God for this planet. The Noahide concept is the beginning of that great goal.<sup>40</sup>

Identity adherents too see themselves as a righteous remnant whose fealty is of no less import in these final days:

...we shall be called upon to lead at least a remnant of our household to liberation and victory in Christ, over the anti-Christ, anti-White forces. In the beginning we shall be few but, but as our discipline, will, and commitment are shown to the people, that Order and Truth are one, then the many shall become one in total commitment, as we seek the Government or Kingdom (Matt. 6:33).<sup>41</sup>

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son of the late chief rabbi of mandatory Palestine, Abraham Isaac Kook. See HaRav Tzvi Yehuda HaCohen Kook, *Torat Eretz Yisrael*, Tvzi Fishman, trans. and ed., (Jerusalem: Torat Eretz Yisrael Publications, n.d.). Cf. Ben Zion Bokser, trans. and ed., *Abraham Isaac Kook*, Classics of Western Spirituality, (New York: Paulist Press, 1978).

<sup>39</sup> These movements, despite their miniscule sizes, do see themselves as the bearers of a message of global import. The B'nai Noah could be speaking for Christian Identity as well in this regard:

Noahides hope to build a truly new world order based on the Noahide Code where all people live in peace and harmony with each other and the natural world.

"About the Noahide Movement," *The Gap* (January/February 1992), p. 7.

<sup>40</sup> *What is the B'nai Noah?* (Athens, Tenn.: Echoes of Immanuel, 1991), p. 4.

<sup>41</sup> Letter from Richard Butler to all Aryan Nations supporters, 7 May 1991.

Scripturalism is of key importance to both sets of adherents. The Bible is seen as infallible, while supporting texts, the apocrypha and psuedepigrapha are of key import for many Identity theorists. For the B'nai Noah, the Bible, especially the Pentateuch which comprises the Torah, the Mishna, the Talmud, and the Aggadah are the key texts, as are the writings of Maimonides. This intense scripturalism is the basis within both groups for the intensive hermeneutical activity on which is based not only the day to day actions of the adherents, but which serves too to select, interpret and disseminate to the flock the signs and portents heralding the imminent End of Days. Interestingly, not only do Christian Identity theorists and leading members of the B'nai Noah enjoy similar relationships to inerrant text, but they often tend to concentrate their hermeneutical endeavors on the same passages of scripture: coming of course to mirror image exegetics! For example, no one familiar with the anti-Semitic polemics which have flowed from the dualistic imagery of the Sons of God and the Daughters of Men [Gen. 6:1-2], or the malign role of the Canaanite seed line within Christian Identity would fail to be taken aback by the similar, yet mirror image, hermeneutics of B'nai Noah activist Jack Saunders in a recent issue of *The Gap*.<sup>42</sup> Or to put it the point more bluntly:

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<sup>42</sup> Jack E. Saunders, "Ben Ish vs Ben Adam Emotion vs Intellect," *The Gap* (March/April 1992), p. 7. Robert Miles, a Michigan Klan leader whose Dualist Church is often mistaken for Identity, bases much of his theology on precisely this passage. See Robert Miles, *Beyond the Bars...The Stars!* (June 1983), p. 1. For a standard Identity view of this passage, and of the flood, see Sheldon Emry, "God and Lincoln on Negro White Marriages," pamphlet distributed by Virginia Christian Israelites (Roundhill, Va.: n.d.), pp. 2-3, 6:

Marriages between the Adamites (sons of God) and the pre-Adamites (daughters of men) (Gen. 6:1-2) brought on the Noahic flood to destroy their mongrel offspring in that area.



We agree with Jeremiah, that the New Covenant is to be made with the house of Judah and the house of Israel (Jer. 31), not with gentiles who are to replace the Jews.<sup>43</sup>

...Jeremiah 31:35-36 insures that Biblical Israel would always remain a nation between the eternal God forever, with unbroken continuity. From the time that the prophesy was given (B.C. 606) to the present, the Anglo-Saxon and kindred peoples are one and the same with Biblical Israel.<sup>44</sup>

The focus on Jeremiah 31 points up the most basic convergence between the B'nai Noah and Christian Identity: the primary focus of each group on the concept of covenant, and on the reconstruction of a divinely ordered system which once, in a golden age of the past, bound men to God in lives which were regulated by the functioning of a living codex of law and custom which brought peace, security and happiness to the faithful. The B'nai Noah seek to recover as a living institution the Noahide Covenant, and point to the God-fearers as the Golden Age model in which the Noahide Code functioned to the benefit of all.<sup>45</sup> Identity for its part, seeks to regain the covenant of Abraham, wrested from the people of Israel by the malign cabal of false Jews of the Synagogue of Satan.

Following closely on the intense scripturalism of both movements is a primary tenet of belief central to the B'nai Noah and Christian Identity alike; the imperative for sacred law to supersede the secular legal system in the present day. For the B'nai Noah, this mandates

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<sup>43</sup> James Tabor, "Is the B'nai Noach Movement Christian?" *The Jewish Press*, 10 May 1991.

<sup>44</sup> Dan Gayman, "In Search of Abraham's Children," pamphlet published by the Church of Israel (March 1987), p. 9. Cf. "The Marks of Israel in Scripture," undated pamphlet from the Virginia Christian Israelites of Round Hill, Virginia, pp. 3-5, which lists the top 40 scriptural proofs that Anglo-Saxons are Israel. Jeremiah 31 proves that Israel is to live on islands and coasts of the earth (31:7-10); that Israel is to be first among nations (31:7); that Israel is to continue as a nation forever (31:35-37); and that Israel is to find the "aborigines" diminishing before them (31:7-10). All of these are posited as referring to America.

<sup>45</sup> James Tabor, "Is the B'nai Noach Movement Christian?" *The Jewish Press*, 3 May 1991.

the institution of the Seven Laws of Noah as the basic law of the land while Christian Identity tends to adopt the work of Christian Reconstructionists who seek to derive a legal code from an inerrant Bible.<sup>46</sup> For both sets of adherents, these divinely ordained systems of law emphasize the necessity to exact the penalty of death for a variety of transgressions, while ironically, it is the certainty that the Noahide Code is intended primarily as a system through which a cabal of Talmudic Jews will be empowered to execute Christians which forms the heart of the Identity critique of the current Noahide movement.

The historic development of the death penalty as a constituent of the institution of the Noahide Code will be considered more fully below. Here, it is sufficient to note that in the early days of the fledgling B'nai Noah movement, roughly that period in the mid-1980s when Vendyl Jones, J. David Davis and Jack Saunders were casting about for a direction--and a name--for the Noahide movement, the death penalty for transgression of any of the seven Noahide laws was a major point of discussion.<sup>47</sup> In the earliest teachings of the Orthodox rabbis most closely identified with the movement, the death penalty remained a central tenet of belief.<sup>48</sup> Reflecting on the institution of the Noahide Code in the world today, and on the application of the penalty of death for transgression of the code, two stipulations become clear in the movement's internal as well as external dialogues. First, the B'nai Noah maintain an absolute confidence that the Noahide code will one day be instituted, but that this will happen in the context of universal messianic redemption. More,

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<sup>46</sup> Interview with Dan Gayman, 9-11 December 1991. For a good example of this process, Dan Gayman, "The Christian View of Civil Government," 2 hour tape series, June 23, 1986. A favorite Reconstructionist text is Gary DeMarr's massive *God and Government*.

<sup>47</sup> Interview with J. David Davis, 20 May 1992; Interview with R. Israel Chait, 13 May 1992.

<sup>48</sup> Interview with R. Israel Chait, 13 May 1992. R. Michael Katz, conversely, plays down the importance of these discussions, noting that the B'nai Noah are hardly likely to be in a position to enforce such a penalty in any case. In this, he is very much in line with the views of the early rabbinical authorities. Interview with R. Michael Katz, 23 March 1992.

this redemption is imminent in that they see messianism as both a process and in terms of a personal messiah.<sup>49</sup> Thus, the Code could be instituted before the messiah is revealed. Second, as the movement has expanded and matured, the death penalty has come to be seen as the maximum penalty, to be carried out automatically only in the case of murder. Thus, while the penalty for theft for example, is mandated as death, it would be most unlikely that, say, the theft of an apple would result in the execution of the thief.<sup>50</sup>

Christian Identity too sees the imposition of biblical law as incumbent on the believer,<sup>51</sup> and, like the B'nai Noah, death is the penalty mandated for transgression of the divine law. How strongly this belief is held by Identity adherents was illustrated recently by a controversy embroiling Populist Party presidential candidate Col. "Bo" Gritz with a group of Identity pastors. Col. Gritz, although not himself an Identity adherent, announced his candidacy at leading Identity Pastor Pete Peters' Scriptures for America Bible Camp in Colorado, and has drawn much of his support from Kingdom believers--at least until an interview with several Identity pastors in which it was revealed that the candidate was, in their view, sending the wrong signal; to wit, an S.O.S. (Soft on Sodomites). The problem arises from Leviticus 20:13, which mandates death for homosexuality (a position supported by the Noahide Code as well). Confronted by Identity pastors Paul Hall and Ted Weiland, Col. Gritz declined to follow their demand

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<sup>49</sup> Interview with J. David Davis, 20 May 1992.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid. R. Israel Chait points out in this context that halacha, Jewish law, has two dimensions: the philosophical and the juridical. Interview with R. Israel Chait, 13 May 1992. Thus, while theft may be in one sense an offense against divine law, and thus deserving of death, there is no precedent for the imposition of death on a person accused of so minor a transgression. It may well have been the influence of halachic scholars which modified the rigid adherence to text which the former Protestant fundamentalist adherents of Noahidism brought with them to the movement.

<sup>51</sup> The Christian Committee (to Teach Bible Law) of Lakemore, Ohio has in fact created a series of lessons in Bible Law, including examinations and a diploma for successful completion of the course. Better established is the decade old *Christian Law Journal* edited by John S. Woods in Haydon, Idaho.

that, he, as president, institute the stoning of "sodomites" in the public square. Worse, he argued that even "a merciful death [by] hanging, the electric chair [or] whatever" sounded "pretty tough to me," and therefore would not be part of his program as president.<sup>52</sup>

One convergence which has become absolutely clear, to the apparent surprise of both sets of believers, is that adherence to the belief system, be it Noahide or Christian Identity, is strongly contra-acculturative in terms of current American society. It is striking to the outside observer that the Christian Identity believers would be surprised to find themselves excluded to a great degree from the surrounding culture. Nonetheless, such rejection always seems to catch Identity adherents unprepared.<sup>53</sup>

It seems to have come as an even greater shock to the B'nai Noah that they too have largely been excluded from the communities in which they were once influential pillars. This is especially true of those adherents, J. David Davis, Jack Saunders and Vendyl Jones most notably, who as fundamentalist Protestant ministers were once considered community leaders in small, closely knit southern towns. But even some of those B'nai Noah who have not taken high profile positions have found themselves isolated and excluded, with even their children losing their friends.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> "An Open Letter to Colonel 'Bo' Gritz Regarding His Views On: Homosexuality in America," *Jubilee* 4 (March/April 1992), p. 10-11. Cf. the regular *Jubilee* column, "S. A. D. (Sodomites Against Decency)."

<sup>53</sup> See the extended quote in Chapter 2 from: Donald S. McAlvany, "Encouragement for the Remnant," *The McAlvany Intelligence Advisor* (December 1991), p. 3. The McAlvany quote touched many who read it, as evidenced by its being picked up in other Identity journals. See for example "The Remnant," *Kinship Communication* newsletter (January 1992), p. 1.

<sup>54</sup> Interview with Laura Morgan of Hoschton, Georgia, 11 April 1992. Laura Morgan points out that as a long time religious seeker, she had drifted from Baptist sects to Charismatic groups before finding the B'nai Noah, and that in each of these commitments her entire social world was constructed upon the church community. Thus in opting out of Christianity, she was as well indirectly making a very public renunciation of her former community. Another B'nai Noah adherent in rural Georgia however, was never as closely identified with his Baptist community, remaining "unsaved" until he was over 40 years old (he is now in his early 60s). In his case, he is far more circumspect about public professions of his new found faith, and has thus suffered far fewer repercussions within

Yet like the racist adherents of Christian Identity, the behavior of some B'nai Noah adherents has often been intentionally scandalous.<sup>55</sup> This behavior commenced with the removal of such symbols of communal normality as church steeples, crosses, and the like from church buildings, and deepened with the penetration of a doctrine seen as heretical at best (or satanic at worst) by the community. And all of this is capped by a flow of strangers, including Jewish rabbis and hassidic teachers, into towns which had never actually seen a Jew in person,<sup>56</sup> as well as a forays by journalists bringing unwanted publicity into the lives of people who have historically prided themselves on their ability to solve problems within the family and the community. Little wonder then, that such missives as the following have appeared with some regularity in the movement's literature:

We have been told that we have been deceived by the devil and are probably demon possessed ourselves. People are warned not to talk to us, for if they do they will go away believing the way we do. We somehow are able to cast some mysterious spell and alter the way people believe. I realize that we live in the twentieth century, but from some of the things people have been reported to have said I think we have slipped back into the dark ages, or at least to the times

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the community. Interview with B'nai Noah adherent (name withheld on request), 11 April 1992.

<sup>55</sup> Intentionally scandalous behavior is not only typical of sectarian movements, but is a defining feature of fundamentalism as a global religious phenomenon. See Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, "Conclusion: An Interim Report on a Hypothetical Family," in *Fundamentalism Observed*, Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, eds., (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 818. The sociologist Rodney Stark has suggested that for a new religious movement to survive, it must maintain a delicate balance between behavior which is sufficiently scandalous to differentiate itself from the mainstream religious community and thus attract members, but not so scandalous or esoteric that it becomes notorious, and thus is unable to either expand, or ultimately, to retain its adherents. For this theory in full, see Rodney Stark, "How New Religions Succeed: A Theoretical Model," in *The Future of New Religious Movements*, David Bromley and Phillip Hammond eds., (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1987). For a study applying this theory to a new religious movement, the Holy Order of MANS, see Philip Lucas, "Social Factors in the Failure of New Religious Movements: A Case Study Using Stark's Success Model," *Syzygy* 1 (Winter 1992), pp. 42-43.

<sup>56</sup> This is a point made to the author by James Tabor in an interview on 23 March 1992. Cf. "Tennessee Baptists Turn to Judaism for New Inspiration," *The Wall Street Journal*, 20 March 1991.

of the Salem Witch hunts in which numerous innocent people were tortured or killed.<sup>57</sup>

Dear David [Davis] and Fellow Noahides,  
Greetings from the Noahide community in Amarillo, Texas. We would like to take the opportunity to thank your group in Athens for including our group...in your weekly studies from the Torah, via speaker phone hook-up. Turning from pagan Christianity to the one and only God of Israel has left us isolated, alone, without much fellowship (as you can well understand) from being active in any spiritual way with our former "Christian" brethren.<sup>58</sup>

It is fortunate that the B'nai Noah have thus far not been the targets of violence in their communities, or from outsiders. Their contra-acculturative stance has in fact caused some splits in the families of adherents,<sup>59</sup> while their outspoken embrace of the Jews, publicized through an active media outreach,<sup>60</sup> has attracted the attention not only of adherents of Christian Identity, but other elements of the American racist right. The

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<sup>57</sup> Jack E. Saunders, "Ben Ish vs Ben Adam Emotion vs Intellect," p. 8.

<sup>58</sup> "Friends Respond," *The Gap* (January/February 1992), p. 6. Portion of a letter from Joyce Williams.

<sup>59</sup> "Tennessee Baptists Turn to Judaism for New Inspiration," *The Wall Street Journal*, 20 March 1991; "Dixie Noahides Practice Despite Problems," *The Jewish Week*, 17 August 1990. This has led to some defensiveness in the movement over the charge that in dividing families, the B'nai Noah constitute a religious cult. The reply of the movement to such charges is unequivocal: "...this is the faith of Abel, Enoch, Noah, and even Abraham (before his circumcision). You could not find a religious Faith on this planet with older roots than the Noahide one! **You would hardly call the religion of these Patriarchs a 'cult.'** It is the very foundation of Western ethical and moral values." [emphasis in original] *What is the B'nai Noah?*, pp. 4-5.

<sup>60</sup> The Root and Branch Association, publisher of the *Noahide Guide*, exists "to promote knowledge of the Noahide Covenant and observance of the Noahide Laws." *The Root and Branch Noahide Guide 1991-5752*, p. 54. The same publication lists the names, addresses and telephone numbers of 22 individuals, 14 organizations, and 5 publications from around the world. The availability of the B'nai Noah to press coverage of the movement (carried in full in the Guide) is obvious. There are, in addition, public and semi-public conferences, "cassette ministries" (an Identity favorite as well), and the like to spread the word.

lightening rod for the movement, J. David Davis, has indeed been called names,<sup>61</sup> received a good deal of racist and anti-Semitic literature,<sup>62</sup> and reportedly has even received some death threats on his answering machine.<sup>63</sup> Davis underplays the volume or importance of these however.<sup>64</sup>

This isolation from the mainstream of the Christian community on the part of both the B'nai Noah and Christian Identity has led both groups to respond with a virtually identical rejection of mainstream Christianity. For both sets of adherents, the belief that modern Christianity not only derives from Judaic roots, but in essence has become an unnecessary and illegitimate belief system, stems again from an hermeneutical approach to scripture and an almost identical interpretation of history. For example, Dr. James Tabor, an academic specialist in early Christianity, became interested in the Noahide movement through his academic field. He had developed the theory that Paul was trying to form a

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<sup>61</sup> One of the more interesting (and printable) is "vomit eating dog." "Noah's Followers Ignore Flood of Jibes," *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, 8 June 1991.

<sup>62</sup> Apparently, several B'nai Noah have received hate literature through the mail. The material sent to J. David Davis was made available for this research, and it was not difficult to conclude that no Christian Identity believer was involved in this effort. Rather, the material seems to have originated with Chicago's own Joe Dilys. Dilys, a long time racist, loosely associated with neo-Naziism, is eclectic in his racist affiliations. He is memorable for his most famous quote: "The synagogue is an embassy of Hell. Every Rabbi is an ambassador of Lucifer." See an undated mailing from The Christian Educational Association of St. Petersburg, Florida, "What is Jewish Ritual Murder???" for the quote. The material received by Davis included the anti-Semitic newspaper, *The Truth At Last*; material from the Institute for Historical Review, a Holocaust revisionist group; and various neo-Nazi material including Dr. William Pierce's National Alliance organ, the *National Vanguard* asserting Jewish control of the American media, as well as sheets of racist cartoons from the SS Action Group in Dearborn, Michigan and racist jokes from the National White People's Party of Tifton, Georgia. Perhaps the most unusual additions to this collection of arcania are two documents published by the Remain Intact "ORGAN"ization [emphasis in original]--a group in Larchwood, Iowa headed by Russell Zangger which is dedicated to ending the practice of infant circumcision. Remain Intact provides graphic drawings and emotional prose to drive home its point.

<sup>63</sup> Interview with James Tabor, 23 March 1992.

<sup>64</sup> Interview with J. David Davis, 12 March 1992.

messianic Noahide movement led by James, brother of Jesus [based partly on Acts 15].<sup>65</sup>

He writes:

Classic Christianity, as it developed from the late 1st century CE onward, is far, far removed from the true Biblical Faith. **To put it simply, Christianity is not the ancient path. It is a new, almost wholly pagan, Hellenistic, quasi-Gnostic, amalgamation...**

**...The Christians lost touch with the Hebrew language and modes of thought, and with the long and fruitful history of rabbinic exegesis and understanding of Scripture...The Hebraic roots of the movement were totally severed.**

**...To those with eyes to see, Christianity became "mystery Babylon the Great," incorporating into one great unified system Western Paganism and Greek rationalism.**<sup>66</sup> [all emphasis in original]

Or again,

**...early gentile "Christianity," might be more accurately classified as a B'nai Noah movement, despite the later heretical developments within Christianity which made Jesus a second deity. B'nai Noah...instructs gentiles to turn directly to the One God as He is revealed in the pages of Scriptures. This is clearly reflected in Acts 15 and Paul's instructions to his gentile converts in letters like *1 Corinthians* (see chapters 5-10) and *1 Thessalonians 1:9* states "...how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God." He instructs the gentiles on the seven Noahide Laws. These were made binding on the gentiles by none other than Jacob (James), brother of Jesus, and leader of the Nazerine Sect. They were among the "God-fearers"...**<sup>67</sup> [emphasis in original]

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<sup>65</sup> Interview with James Tabor, 23 March 1992.

<sup>66</sup> James D. Tabor, "Plain Talk About Christianity Paganism and Torah Faith," *Gap* (November-December 1991), pp. 1-2. "Mystery Babylon" is derived from Alexander Hilsop's 1916 work *The Two Babylons*, and the epithet (drawn as well from Hilsop) for mainstream Christianity--and the contemporary United States--has become ubiquitous in Christian Identity discourse.

<sup>67</sup> *What is the B'nai Noah?* p. 5.



For the adherents of Christian Identity, Judeo-Christianity is a contemptuous term for the current perceived Jewish subversion and conquest of mainstream Christianity. The theory is offered by Dan Gayman:

In order for you to understand why America is being captured from within and is making no resistance to the barbarian hordes attacking us from without, you must walk inside the modern church, and you must examine what is being taught from the pulpits...Only when you have examined these Fables from the ancient darkness of the **Jewish Babylonian Talmud** can you begin to understand why a nation of more than two hundred million people will allow their country to be taken from them, their Christian heritage trampled underfoot, their children destroyed...The blame lies with those preaching Jewish Fables in the modern churches of America and the western world, and we must go inside these churches and expose lie upon lie, fable upon fable, and let the TRUTH of Jesus Christ and the Word of God expose the Jewish Fables for what they really are...**the preachment of Satan and his children the Jews.**<sup>68</sup> [emphasis in original]

It is a short step then from a feeling that Christianity as it is practiced in the modern world has somehow gone wrong to a finding that the problem lies not as much with the Church today as it does with events in the formative stages of Christianity. For the adherents of so manichaeian a belief system as Christian Identity, the blame can be laid at the door of the Talmudic Jew and an age-old conspiracy against the people of God.<sup>69</sup> For the B'nai Noah, the fault can be traced to another group of malign outsiders; Hellenized and pagan gentiles whose influence attributed a divinity to Christ which Jesus would never have claimed.<sup>70</sup> And for both, the only possible answer to the finding of Christian inadequacy is to separate from the mainstream of Christian culture.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Dan Gayman, "Jewish Fables Capture American Pulpits," *Zions Watchman*, pp. 2-3. Pastor Gayman includes in this article a virtual codex of relevant scriptural passages.

<sup>69</sup> A good early presentation of this view is Gerald B. Winrod, *Adam Weishaupt A Human Devil*, or Kenneth Goff, *Traitors in the Pulpit*.

<sup>70</sup> James Tabor observes that the B'nai Noah are only one of a wider group of Christians who in the last century have sought to rediscover the roots of Christian belief in the early, pre-Hellenic period of Christian history, often coming to what Dr. Tabor calls "...some

Finally, it is with the effort to enlist allies, and to combat enemies, that the dimensions of the millennial/messianic community can best be seen. Both sets of adherents, despite their dreams of future growth, are well aware of their minority status, and are acutely conscious of their isolation and unpopularity within their respective religious and geographical communities. Thus, a great deal of effort must be put into cementing alliances and defending against attacks.

Christian Identity has something of an advantage over the B'nai Noah in this regard in that they function within a wider community of interest that one observer has correctly dubbed the White supremacist constellation.<sup>72</sup> Within this fluid constellation of belief systems, patterns of alliance can be detected on both the leadership and ideological levels. In terms of leadership, serial and concurrent allegiances are common among Identity leaders. For example, former Identity leader Tom Metzger has drifted from Christian Identity to the Ku Klux Klan to neo-Nazi beliefs, before at last settling on his own group,

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form of Second Temple Judaism, as they imagine it." This diverse group of spiritual pilgrims may be said to include Sacred Name believers of various hues, as well as groups as diverse as Herbert W. Armstrong's modified Anglo-Israelite Worldwide Church of God, liberal Protestants and Catholics, and mainstream fundamentalist/evangelical Protestants. Letter from James Tabor, 11 May 1992.

<sup>71</sup> It is interesting to note that the belief that Christianity is Jewish, and therefore illegitimate, goes well beyond Identity or the B'nai Noah. On the radical fringes of this belief system in America is Ben Klassen's Church of the Creator, whose central tenet is that Christianity is Jewish and therefore must be eliminated and replaced with a religion it calls Creativity; an odd blend of rewritten Christianity, health faddism, and histrionic racism. In Russia there is apparently a wing of Pamyat, the ultra-nationalist and often mystical pan-Slavic revivalist movement, that has come to the same conclusion as the Church of the Creator. Reacting to a recent warning by the Russian Orthodox Church that Hassidic Jews want to create an ecumenical world religion as a weapon against Christianity, these elements of Pamyat have put forth the view that while this charge is undoubtedly correct, the Russian Orthodox church itself, and much of the civilization which stemmed from the Christian era, is in any case Jewish and so must be done away with, substituting a form of pre-Christian paganism. On Pamyat, Interview with R. Dov Ber Haskelevich, 23 March 1992. On the COC, see the monthly newspaper, *Racial Loyalty*.

<sup>72</sup> Michael Barkun, "Millenarian Aspects of 'White Supremacist' Movements."

WAR.<sup>73</sup> Going in the opposite direction, Ralph Forbes, a would be candidate for office in Arkansas at the head of the New America First Party, began his career in George Lincoln Rockwell's American Nazi Party, and following a drift through various radical right groupings, now sees himself as a Christian Identity pastor.<sup>74</sup>

As common as these serial membership patterns are dual or even multiple allegiances. The most venerable of these appears to be the long standing identification of some Identity pastors with the Ku Klux Klan. Reuben Sawyer in Oregon in the 1920s was one of the first to establish this linkage,<sup>75</sup> while Wesley Swift in California was in the 1950s and 1960s the most prominent such figure. Thom Robb in Arkansas today carries on this tradition.<sup>76</sup>

The ideological interaction within Identity ranks may be seen in microcosm in two distinct contexts: the annual retreats offered by various Identity ministries and the negative example of the unsuccessful attempt of the Order to utilize revolutionary violence to carve out a White homeland in the American northwest. The Order at its height included both Identity adherents and neo-pagan Odinists, and managed to forge alliances with groups ranging from survivalists to Robert Miles' Dualist church to, apparently, Dan Gayman's Identity church.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, *Extremism on the Right: A Handbook*, pp. 128-129.

<sup>74</sup> ADL, *Extremism on the Right: A Handbook*, pp. 91-93. Cf. the form letter mailed under the letterhead of Forbes' The New America First Committee, dated 6 February 1992, which includes in the letterhead the names of such former America Firsters as Charles Lindbergh, Sen. Joseph Nye, and even such University of Chicago luminaries as Robert Huthchins and William Benton.

<sup>75</sup> Michael Barkun, "From British Israelism to Christian Identity: The Evolution of White Supremacist Religious Doctrine," p. 57.

<sup>76</sup> On Swift, *idid.*, p. 59. Cf. James Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness*, p. 55. On Robb, author interview with Thom Robb, 24 August 1991.

<sup>77</sup> On the presence of Odinists, see Richard Kelly Hoskins, *Vigilantes of Christendom*, pp. 433-442; and Kevin Flynn and Gary Gerhardt, *The Silent Brotherhood*, p. 96.

More to the point than the Order's highly publicized exploits however, are the retreats and Bible camps sponsored by major Identity ministries. These remain in the public mind closely associated with paramilitary training and extravagantly worded race baiting speeches at such redoubts as Richard Butler's Aryan Nations compound in Idaho or at the now closed Jim Ellison's Covenant, Sword and Arm of the Lord compound in Missouri.<sup>78</sup> These high profile exercises however, were more the exception than the norm among Kingdom believers, and with the passage in many states of an ADL sponsored model statute outlawing paramilitary activities, much of the attraction of these events has waned. Far more common are family oriented events in which the religious message predominates, and while racialism remains a central tenet of belief, violence is decidedly not an item on the agenda, with firearms, drugs or alcohol strictly forbidden. Probably the most important of these retreats has come to be the Colorado based Identity pastor Pete Peters' Scriptures for America Bible camp held each summer in the Rocky Mountains. These diverse gatherings bring together not only Identity believers, but speakers and participants from a broad spectrum of the White supremacist constellation,<sup>79</sup> and provide as well a center from which key Christian Identity figures meet to forge broad alliances

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<sup>78</sup> Announcements for both the Aryan Nations World Congress and the CS&A jamboree are reprinted in James A. Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness: Idaho's Christian Patriotism*, pp. 29-30.

<sup>79</sup> For example, expected guests at Scriptures for America camps have included Identity pastors Earl Jones and Richard Kelly Hoskins as well as traditionalist Catholic priest, Daniel E. Jones. See Father Daniel E. Jones, "Scriptures for America Bible Camp-June 25-30," *Sangre de Cristo Newsnotes* (March 1990), p. 2; or "Personal Letter for Pastor Peters," undated form letter from Pete Peters announcing the 1992 camp. Father Daniel E. Jones reviews the camp after the fact, estimating the attendance at 500 and gushing over the candidate for the presidency on the Populist Party ticket, Bo Gritz ("the real live Green Beret hero who inspired the movies **Rambo** and **Uncommon Valor**") [emphasis in original], who announced his candidacy at the camp. Father Daniel E. Jones' letter to all *Sangre de Cristo Newsnotes* subscribers, 8 December 1991.

aimed at moving the highly fragmented world of Christian Identity theology in an increasingly sectarian direction.<sup>80</sup>

Christian Identity has had little success than in building alliances with the wider culture. In fact, despite some efforts at taking the concerns of Christian Identity adherents to elected officials<sup>81</sup> and to the general public, Identity Christianity remains largely unknown to most Americans. When the movement does surface in the popular media, it is invariably presented in caricature, concentrating on its most radical and violent forms, with the revolutionary Order or the antinomianism of the most isolated Identity compounds featured prominently.<sup>82</sup> This portrayal is much in evidence in the publications of the movement's most implacable organized foes, the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, Klanwatch and the Center for Democratic Renewal.<sup>83</sup>

The B'nai Noah find themselves in a considerably more isolated position than does Christian Identity. Unlike Identity whose racial message serves to build alliances among groups and individuals who have little interest in Kingdom theology, the B'nai Noah have no natural outside constituency for their message. They must therefore, rely on support

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<sup>80</sup> Remnant Resolves Committee, *Remnant Resolves* (La Porte, Colorado: n.d.). This document emerged from the Scriptures for America Christian Bible Camp which took place on 23 July 1988 at Cedaridge, Colorado.

<sup>81</sup> A group of Christian Identity pastors make an annual pilgrimage to Washington to attempt to interest elected representatives in issues of concern to the Identity community. See Earl F. Jones, "Congressional Visit," *Christian Crusade For Truth Intelligence Newsletter* (January-February 1989), p. 8; and Earl F. Jones, "Our Trip to the Congressmen," *Christian Crusade For Truth Intelligence Newsletter* (March-April 1989), p. 2.

<sup>82</sup> Kevin Flynn and Gary Gerhardt, *The Silent Brotherhood*; and James Coates, *Armed and Dangerous: The Rise of the Survivalist Right* are prominent examples. For the flavor of the popular press coverage of Identity, see "A Sinister Search for Identity," *Time*, 20 October 1986, p. 74.

<sup>83</sup> Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, *Hate Groups In America: A Record of Bigotry and Violence*; and ADL, "The 'Identity Churches': A Theology of Hate," *ADL Facts* 28 (Spring 1983). The relevant publication of Klanwatch is the *Klanwatch Intelligence Report* and that of the Center for Democratic Renewal is *The Monitor*.

from the Jewish community just as they depend on the rabbinate for education and guidance. This effort however, is proving to be somewhat more problematic than it would appear on first glance, for the Jewish community is itself fragmented along ideological lines, and the B'nai Noah have become somewhat enmeshed in these conflicts.

It is important to note at the beginning of any examination of the relationship of the B'nai Noah to the Jewish community that in general, it is clear that the initiative was taken by the B'nai Noah themselves. A prominent exception to this rule was the case of R. Israel Chait. R. Chait traces his involvement to the day in March, 1991 that he read the *Wall Street Journal* article publicizing David Davis and the B'nai Noah. Seeing a gentile who truly understood that the wisdom of Torah is for all people, and who further recognizes that Christianity is a form of paganism, and thus idolatry, R. Chait felt the need to contact this man. So too did three of R. Chait's students.<sup>84</sup> This instance of contact being initiated by Jews remains exceptional, however. Rather, the courtship of the Jewish community has been no easy task, and the effort has taken a variety of forms. Once an alliance relationship is formed however, it is equally clear that the B'nai Noah largely subordinate themselves to the direction of the Jewish rabbinical authorities. Conversely, there are limits to this control, with rabbinical leadership held as influential, but in the last analysis, purely advisory.<sup>85</sup>

The effort to enlist Jewish support began in earnest in the mid-1980s, and involved two major outreach efforts: towards the Lubavitcher movement on the one hand, and on the other, towards local Orthodox rabbis. These efforts had by 1989 achieved sufficient success to suggest greater possibilities to the B'nai Noah and their rabbinic teachers, and so in 1989 Vendyl Jones took the lead in organizing the first annual International Conference of B'nai Noah which was duly held in Fort Worth, Texas from 28-30 April 1990. It was

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<sup>84</sup> Interview with R. Israel Chait, 13 May 1992.

<sup>85</sup> Conversation with R. Michael Katz, 17 May 1992.

at this conference that the now burgeoning localized Noahide groups coalesced to form an international movement, the *Agudat Karem B'nai No'ach* (Union of the Vineyard of the Children of Noah), which asked for and received the blessing--and official sanction--of the Chief Sephardi Rabbi of Israel, Mordechai Eliahu.<sup>86</sup>

The initiative toward the Chief Rabbinate seems to have occasioned some internal controversy in B'nai Noah circles. On the one side, R. Michael Katz was a strong advocate of trying to connect the B'nai Noah with elements of the Heredi community--particularly with Agudat Israel, and perhaps with Mizrachi as well.<sup>87</sup> R. Katz's calculation was shrewdly political. In his view, the institution of the Chief Rabbinate had become so scarred by a long history of compromise and scandal that a B'nai Noah alliance with the Chief Rabbis would preclude a far more rewarding alliance, intellectually and spiritually, with the Heredim. David Davis chose to disregard this advice, apparently impressed with the institutional weight of the Chief Rabbinate, and perhaps calculating as well that the Heredi parties would sooner reconcile themselves to the B'nai Noah connection with the Chief Rabbis than would the Chief Rabbinate to an exclusive B'nai Noah/Hereditim alliance.

In his own recollection, David Davis recalls the pressures to align the movement with one faction or another to be more covert than overt--a campaign of subtle suggestions and internal maneuvering. In Israel as well, there were efforts to enlist the B'nai Noah in

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<sup>86</sup> *The Root and Branch Noahide Guide/1991-5752*, p. 21.

<sup>87</sup> Conversation with Michael Katz, 17 May 1992. On Agudat Israel, see Charles S. Leibman and Eliezer Don-Yehiya, *Religion and Politics in Israel* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1984), ch. 6-7. The Mizrachi movement is largely moribund. From its ashes however, the National Religious Party has risen, and from the youth wing of the NRP, Gush Emunim, the Israeli settlement movement, was born. See Stewart Reiser, *The Politics of Leverage: The National Religious Party and Its Influence on Foreign Policy*, Harvard Middle East Papers Modern Series Number Two, (Cambridge: Center for Middle Eastern Studies, 1984). Further discussion of various aspects of the NRP and of Agudat Israel may be found in Ehud Sprinzak, *The Ascendance of Israel's Radical Right* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Rael Jean Isaac, *Israel Divided: Ideological Politics in the Jewish State* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976); and for the electoral history of both groups, see Nadav Safran, *Israel the Embattled Ally* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1981).

the constant turmoil of Israeli political machinations, as well as into the complex process of internecine Jewish polemics.<sup>88</sup> While he did detect some "pulling back" from the movement as a result of the choice of the Chief Rabbinate over other sectors of Judaism, Davis stresses that he, and the B'nai Noah, are "not marrying anyone, they can walk in any circle."<sup>89</sup> In any case, R. Katz's approaches to Agudat Israel continue at this writing.<sup>90</sup>

The Lubavitcher movement<sup>91</sup> appears to have been the first to have been approached by the B'nai Noah, and it is the Habad community that has perhaps given the most intensive thought to the messianic implications, as well as the potential risks, of the Noahide movement. Habad would seem the most natural sponsor of the fledgling Noahide movement. The Rebbe, R. Manachem Schneerson, has for a number of years led the movement into a period which one scholar refers to as 'acute messianism'.<sup>92</sup> Yet even in such a period of messianic tension, the Rebbe nonetheless shocked the Lubavitcher community in 1982 when he first spoke of the need to spread the news of the Noahide commandments to the gentile community.<sup>93</sup> It was a revolutionary idea,<sup>94</sup> but according

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<sup>88</sup> Interview with J. David Davis, 20 May 1992. David Davis is too diplomatic to add a point raised by Michael Katz; that Davis was unprepared for, and appalled by, the efforts of some Jewish interests to use the B'nai Noah as a fund raising device. Conversation with Michael Katz, 17 May 1992.

<sup>89</sup> Interview with J. David Davis, 20 May 1992.

<sup>90</sup> Conversation with Michael Katz, 17 May 1992.

<sup>91</sup> Two as yet unpublished studies of the Lubavitcher movement inform this essay: Aviezer Ravitzky, "Habad Ideology: Continuity and Change in the Contemporary Lubavitch Hassidic Movement," and Menachem Friedman, "Habad (Lubavitcher) Hassidism--Structure and Fundamental Problems." Both will appear in forthcoming volumes of the Fundamentalism Project of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

<sup>92</sup> Aviezer Ravitzky, "Habad Ideology: Continuity and Change in the Contemporary Lubavitch Hassidic Movement."

<sup>93</sup> Interview with R. Dov Ber Haskelevich, 23 March 1992.

<sup>94</sup> It was, in fact, probably unprecedented in Jewish history in that it mandated in effect a 'missionary movement' among gentiles, seeking to prepare them for imminent redemption rather than for actual conversion. This view is shared by Aviezer Ravitzky, "Habad



to the Rebbe, hardly a new one. He was able to relate anecdotal tales of gentiles quietly following the Noahide path under the instruction of Hassidic teachers in 19th century Poland, and in fact asserted that persecution was the only reason that the Noahide Laws had never really been publicized beyond the rabbinical literature. Since 1982, the Rebbe has said on many occasions that the Noahide Code must be instituted.<sup>95</sup>

However, the Lubavitcher Rebbe may have seen the Noahide Code more in terms of an ideal construct than as a sectarian movement. J. David Davis recalls being told in the early 1980s that the Lubavitcher movement was "into the Noahides," and as a result making 20 or 30 calls over a period of six months to Habad House before getting any response at all,<sup>96</sup> and this gibes with the experience of Vendyl Jones.<sup>97</sup> The latter in fact, has been according to Habad sources particularly insistent, and has gone so far as to ask that his name be enrolled in the Lubavitcher Movement: a request that has been firmly rebuffed.<sup>98</sup>

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Ideology: Continuity and Change in the Contemporary Lubavitch Hassidic Movement," but is denied by Lubavitcher sources who see, at least in Hassidic history, some precedent for a mission outreach to gentiles centered on the Noahide commandments. Interview with R. Dov Ber Haskelevich, 23 March 1992.

<sup>95</sup> Interview with R. Dov Ber Haskelevich, 23 March 1992. R. Haskelevich in this interview gave an example of the practical impact of the Noahides which reveals much of life in Crown Heights in Brooklyn, the home of the R. Schneerson and the Lubavitcher community. Taking as his text the question, 'If a gentile is living in your house, do you have an obligation to teach him the Law?' R. Haskelevich relates the case of a black worker doing repairs in one of Habad's religious centers. Caught masturbating in the bathroom, he could not understand why this would be forbidden until he was taught the Law relating to sexual sins. James Tabor, speculating on why the Rebbe would suddenly evince an interest in the Noahide Code, intuited that the primary reason might be the wish to have "decent neighbors," in both the immediate and the metaphorical sense. Interview with James Tabor, 23 March 1992.

<sup>96</sup> Interview with J. David Davis, 12 March 1992. Davis denies the assertion in the *Jerusalem Post* article of 20 July 1991 that they broke with the Lubavitchers over efforts by Habad to "take them over." " 'Torah Belt' Among Tennessee Baptists," *Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 20 July 1991, p. 7. Habad for its part, remains wary of the B'nai Noah.

<sup>97</sup> Interview with R. Dov Ber Haskelevich, 23 March 1992.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

Thus, while there is some Habad involvement with the B'nai Noah as teachers, the Lubavitcher movement remains distinctly wary of any close identification with them. Indeed, the Rebbe has never publicly mentioned the existence of an organized B'nai Noah movement.<sup>99</sup> Several reasons for this caution may be posited. First, despite undoubted good will and the unprecedented nature of the current Rebbe's dealings with gentiles, in the last analysis, there is reason to believe that R. Schneerson simply can not bring himself to trust fully a gentile movement.<sup>100</sup> To this can be added the halachic problems involved with certain talmudic traditions forbidding the "teaching Goyim Torah."<sup>101</sup> Second, The Rebbe is too cautious to put his name on something he doesn't fully control, feeling that an endorsement would make him responsible for their actions, finances, and the like.<sup>102</sup> Further, R. Schneerson has warned Vendyl Jones on at least one occasion that if the Rebbe did lend his name to the movement, other Jews would surely turn away, and in any

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> This view was expressed off the record by several sources, both within Habad and by outside observers. It seems likely, but the Rebbe is silent on the reasons for his distancing of Habad from the B'nai Noah. For a public formulation of this view, see R. Kasriel Kastel, head of the Lubavitcher Youth Organization, quoted in: "Righteous Gentiles Aspire to Torah Learning," *The Jewish Press*, 13 July 1990.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid. Maimonides teaches that gentiles studying Torah are deserving of death. Abraham M. Hershman, trans., *The Code of Maimonides: Book Fourteen, The Book of Judges* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1949), tractate Kings and Wars, ch. IX, p. 237. R. Israel Chait warns against a too literal reading of the Rambam on this. He asserts that in reality, Maimonides did not suggest the death penalty for gentile Torah study. What he meant, a complete reading of the entire corpus of the Rambam's thought makes clear, is that Gentiles are not permitted to study Torah without a practical reason. Torah study must never be an intellectual exercise, but must be pursued purposefully. Habad hermeneutics disagree with R. Chait's view, taking a more literal reading of the text. Interview with R. Israel Chait, 13 May 1992. Interview with R. Dov Ber Haskelevich, 23 March 1992.

<sup>102</sup> Interview with R. Dov Ber Haskelevich, 23 March 1992. Control seems to be a major point of contention. While David Davis denies that Habad tried to take over the movement, others in the movement feel that Habad does insist on total control as the price for involvement. Interview with James Tabor, 23 March 1992.

case, he is clearly displeased with the increasingly sectarian drift of the movement.<sup>103</sup> More, with regard to Vendyl Jones, the Rebbe objects as strongly as do the adherents of Christian Identity to the concept of "Judeo-Christianity," and Jones has named his own base of operations in Arlington, Texas, the Institute of Judaic-Christian Research--thus neatly fulfilling the worst fears of both the Jewish and the anti-Semitic worlds!<sup>104</sup> Finally, the Rebbe, in common with a number of rabbis both within and outside of the Noahide movement, may fear an anti-Semitic backlash from the movement's own provocative actions, with the very public removal of the cross and steeple from the Athens church and David Davis' outspoken view that Christianity is tantamount to idolatry primary cases in point.<sup>105</sup>

Thus, when Vendyl Jones organized the First International Conference of B'nai Noah in Fort Worth, Texas, in April of 1990, despite promises of participation, Habad simply did not show up. In the words of one participant, Habad, despite its strong initial support, "dropped them like a hot potato."<sup>106</sup> The B'nai Noah today thus feel slighted by

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<sup>103</sup> Interview with R. Dov Ber Haskelevich, 23 March 1992.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid. It should be noted that while both Habad and the B'nai Noah focus on efforts to prevent Jewish assimilation, and nothing could be more evocative of assimilation, American style, than the concept of Judeo-Christianity.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid. This view was also expressed by a primary rabbinical authority in the current Noahide movement, Michael Katz, in an interview on 26 March 1992. A number of other rabbis have expressed this fear as well. See for example, "Rabbis Differ in their Reaction to David Davis' B'nai Noah," *The Jewish Voice and Opinion*, June 1991; or "Non-Jews Embracing Judaism," *Jewish Exponent*, 17 May 1991. R. Israel Chait is concerned as well, but while anti-Semitism does worry him, "this is not a reason to hide the truth...[Jews] no longer live in the ghetto..." Interview with R. Israel Chait, 13 May 1992.

<sup>106</sup> Interview with Michael Katz, 26 March 1992. Katz and others later heard that the Rebbe had encouraged individual Lubavitchers to become involved, but did not envision an organized group. R. Katz's recollection may have exaggerated the problem with Habad. It appears that some individual Habad rabbis did appear, but that this was not encouraged (nor prohibited) by the Rebbe. Conversation with James Tabor, 10 May 1992. It must be noted that there appears to be some tension between Habad and Orthodox rabbis connected to the B'nai Noah, and this may be a factor in the perceptions of each other expressed in interviews conducted in connection with this article.

the Lubavitchers, and Davis in fact has privately said that he "has no time for Habad" because Habad has no time for him.<sup>107</sup>

The alliance relationship which the B'nai Noah have chosen not to stress in their dealings with the popular and Jewish press is that which connected Vendyl Jones with the late R. Meir Kahane, founder of the Jewish Defense League in the United States and the Kach Party in Israel. R. Kahane in fact, was the first Orthodox rabbi to embrace the fledgling movement, and he did so uninvited as he was not on the list of some 30 rabbis originally approached by Jones. R. Kahane, described by Vendyl Jones as "a dear and precious friend," addressed the first convention of B'nai Noah in Fort Worth, Texas, on 30 April 1990. R. Kahane's speech was described by Vendyl Jones as a "non-political and down to earth person to person talk and challenge to the B'nai Noah...He was encouraging, sympathetic and appealing to each of us," and for this reason, was a "dear friend...to all those who were a part of the B'nai Noah community." <sup>108</sup>

B'nai Noah attempts to attract the Sponsorship of local rabbis have also proved to be problematic. As with Habad, the initial attempts of the Noahides to forge links with local Jewish communities were gently rebuffed, and to this day the movement has been unable to overcome the sense of embarrassment with which Conservative and Reform Jews seem to regard them.<sup>109</sup> Indeed, until finding R. Michael Katz, the B'nai Noah enjoyed

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Vendyl Jones, "A Prince Has Fallen in Israel," *Researcher* (October-November-December 1990), p. 6. Cf. Rabbi Stewart Weiss, "A Great Man Among Our People Is Dead," *Researcher* (October-November-December 1990), p. 7. R. Kahane's theology was strongly messianic and apocalyptic, and it may have been the case that it was the messianic implications of the B'nai Noah that attracted him to the movement. For an introduction to the theology of Meir Kahane, see, David C. Rapoport, "Religious Fundamentalisms and Militancy," and Ehud Sprinzak, "Three Models of religious Violence: The Case of Jewish Fundamentalism in Israel," in *Fundamentalisms and the State*,.

<sup>109</sup> This is an observation of a primary rabbinic teacher of the movement, Michael Katz, in "Non-Jews Embracing Judaism," *Jewish Exponent*, 17 May 1991. R. Israel Chait is struck as well by the reluctance of other rabbis to speak to him about the Noahide Movement. He finds most rabbis, and Jewish laymen, to be simply uncomfortable praying

no greater success with the Orthodox community. R. Katz's early involvement with the movement began when he was the Orthodox rabbi of a small congregation in Chattanooga, Tennessee. David Davis had approached various rabbis in the area around Athens and had not gotten very far. "Serendipitously" however, one of Davis' flock happened to work together at a temporary job with one of Katz's flock, and the introductions proceeded from that event.<sup>110</sup>

Rabbi Katz offers three reasons for the reluctance of the Orthodox rabbinate to initially embrace the B'nai Noah. First, the rabbis simply didn't have the time. They are paid by their congregants to serve them, and the congregations bitterly resented the rabbi giving some of his time to teach gentiles. Second, many rabbis were very suspicious of the motives of the B'nai Noah. They were fearful of being drawn into some form of syncretism or cult-like activity, or even worse, of being tricked into a missionary movement aimed at converting Jews to Christianity. Finally the rabbis were and are concerned with the possibility of an anti-Semitic backlash.<sup>111</sup>

Gradually however, the sincerity of the movement's adherents began to win friends and supporters from various sectors of the Orthodox rabbinate, and with the increasing press coverage,<sup>112</sup> from some elements of the Jewish community as well. Starting with rabbi Katz in Chattanooga,<sup>113</sup> other rabbis have since become involved as well, either

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or interacting with gentiles in a religious context. He detects too, some hostility on the Jewish side, but this is minor in scope.

<sup>110</sup> Interview with Michael Katz, 26 March 1992.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Media outreach is a major concern of the Noahide movement. The Root and Branch Association under Aryeh Gallin runs its own news service with the aim of supplying "stories on the Noahide Movement and related topics to newspapers, magazines, radio and T.V." "About the Root and Branch Association," *The Gap* (January/February 1992), p. 7. Gallin made aliyah in 1992 and currently resides in Israel.

<sup>113</sup> Rabbi Katz has since left his Tennessee congregation to found the Atlanta Center for Torah, which he currently directs. This has the advantage of giving him a great deal more

offering direct teaching via telephone hook-ups, or by doing research for the movement in an effort to develop prayers, rituals, and the like. These rabbis include Saul Zucker of Paramus, New Jersey, Israel Chait of Far Rockaway, New York, and Yoel Schwartz in Jerusalem to name but a few.<sup>114</sup> Among the Israeli rabbinical supporters of the B'nai Noah, there seems to be a trend towards a specialization of function reminiscent of an incipient hierarchy, with rabbi Manachem Burstin acting as intermediary with the Sephardi Chief Rabbi, and rabbis Chaim Richman and Yoel Schwartz, as well as Yehoshua Yacobovitz coordinating their activities through R. Burstin.<sup>115</sup> Crowning this increasing acceptance of the movement in Jewish circles today will be the construction in the next few months of the B'nai Noah study center noted above in Jerusalem under the authority of the chief rabbinate. Indeed, the Sephardi Chief Rabbi serves as the key figure in this budding relationship.<sup>116</sup>

Perhaps the most interesting of the rabbinical alliances forged by the B'nai Noah, and certainly the most illustrative of the concept of a millennial/messianic community of adherents, is the connection of the B'nai Noah with R. Chaim Richman, Director of Public Affairs for the Temple Institute in Jerusalem.<sup>117</sup> The Temple Institute is one of a welter of

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time for his work with the B'nai Noah. Interview with Michael Katz, 26 March 1992. Cf. "Non-Jews Embracing Judaism," *Jewish Exponent*, 17 May 1991.

<sup>114</sup> Interview with J. David Davis, 12 March 1992. Cf. *The Root and Branch Noahide Guide/1991-5752*, pp. 2-20.

<sup>115</sup> "Prayer Book," *The Gap* (March/April 1992), pp. 1-2.

<sup>116</sup> Interview with J. David Davis, 12 March 1992. In fact, a photograph of Pastor Davis with Sephardi Chief Rabbi Mordechai Eliahu is published in "B'nai Noah: Bible Believers Neither Christian Nor Jewish," *Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 22 February 1992, p. 17.

<sup>117</sup> While the Temple movement is the most public of these connections, it should be noted that the B'nai Noah have other alliances as well, most notably with the anti-missionary activities of Schmuel Golding and his Jerusalem Institute of Temple Polemics and Rabbi Ya'cov Fogelman of the Torah Outreach Program, both headquartered in Jerusalem.. The B'nai Noah seem to have inspired in particular the former group to expand their outreach to gentiles in an effort to "rescue gentiles from idolatry." "Getting the Word Out," *The Gap* (March/April 1992), p. 2.

often competing movements which seek in various ways to reconstitute the Third Temple, and to thus usher in the era of messianic redemption.<sup>118</sup> The Institute takes the view that by fashioning the implements of priestly Temple service according to exact halachic specifications, and by finding the ashes of the perfectly created red heifer for sacrifice as demanded in Jewish Law for the reconsecration of the Temple, is in fact to rebuild the Temple--a work which God will cause to be completed in a manner which the Institute does not care to specify.<sup>119</sup>

So close has this relationship become that B'nai Noah adherents Jack Saunders, James Tabor and David Davis have been named the Institute's official representatives to the non-Jewish world,<sup>120</sup> while for its part, the Institute will endeavor to distribute B'nai

<sup>118</sup> One of these, the Jerusalem Temple Foundation, links American evangelical and fundamentalist Protestants (and their money) with Israeli activists. The Israeli front man for this activity is Stanley Goldfoot, while American adherents include Terry Reisenhoover, Doug Krieger and (sometimes) Lambert Dolphin. For varying views on the JTF and related groups, see Louis Rapoport, "Slouching Towards Armageddon: Links with Evangelicals," *The Jerusalem Post. International Edition.*, June 17, 1984; Barbara & Michael Ledeen, "The Temple Mount Plot," *New Republic* 3 (June 18, 1984), pp. 21-22; Grace Halsell, *Prophecy and Politics* (Westport, Conn.: Lawrence Hill & Co., 1986), pp. 96-97; Ruth W. Mouly, "The Religious Right: Israel's Christian Allies," Unpub. Mss. (n. p., n. d.); and Cynthia Patrick, "SRI Scientists Have Located King Herod's Tomb," *The SRI Journal*. 6 (Sept., 1983). The most extreme manifestation of the movement, unconnected to the JTF, was the so-called Jewish Underground terrorist movement which was formed among Israeli West Bank settlers. One the Underground's primary goals was the destruction of the Haram al-Sharif and the rebuilding of the Temple on its ashes. For a scholarly view this movement, see Ehud Sprinzak, *The Ascendancy of Israel's Radical Right*; and Ehud Sprinzak, "From Messianic Pioneering to Vigilante Terrorism: The Case of the Gush Emunim Underground," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 4 (December 1976), pp. 194-216. For an unparalleled insider's account of the movement, see Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers* (Woodmere, N.Y.: Beit-Shamai Publications, 1988). Cf. the interview with the head of the Temple Mount Faithful, Gershon Salomon; "Gershon Salomon: An Interview," *The Jerusalem Post Magazine*, 13 April 1991.

<sup>119</sup> Rabbi Chaim Richman, "Teachings From the Temple," *The Gap* (March/April 1992), p. 4. The red heifer belief seems to have been a puzzle to the classical rabbinic authorities, who found no biblical foundation for the belief, and for whom the resemblance of this belief to certain occult practices then current among the gentile nations was something of an embarrassment. For the flavor of this controversy, see Ephraim E. Urbach, *The Sages*, pp. 377-378. The quest for the ashes of the red heifer is, as noted above, the prime concern of Vendyl Jones' archaeological endeavors.

<sup>120</sup> "Getting the Word Out," *The Gap* (March/April 1992), p.2.

Noah materials to gentile visitors to the group's Jerusalem museum of Temple implements.<sup>121</sup> James Tabor, who is currently writing a book on the Third Temple groups, asserts that the Temple Institute is happy with them because the Institute can deal with gentiles without compromising their ideals, while the B'nai Noah have warned the Institute members to beware of fundamentalists because "they want the Temple rebuilt so they can have another holocaust."<sup>122</sup> At the same time, not all B'nai Noah adherents, nor all of their rabbinical advisors, are entirely pleased with the association of the movement with the Temple movement. Off the record, some express reservations ranging from the potential of this alliance to alienate other, particularly Heredi sectors of Jewish opinion, to the distasteful nature of the animal sacrifices required in a revived Temple cult--a process which one noted contemporary scholar, Jacob Neusner, has described as "...a holy barbecue...[which] many Jews today would see [as] repulsive."<sup>123</sup>

Whatever the basis of so emotion laden an assertion, the involvement of the B'nai Noah in the Third Temple movement is a key connection, joining them in a web of communication, directly or indirectly, with other millenarian/messianic adherents: the American based evangelicals and fundamentalists concerned with the Temple Mount, the various Israeli constituents of the Temple movement, and the Israeli settlement movement Gush Emunim whose numbers supplied the members of the Jewish Underground terrorist movement and whose primary yeshiva, Mercaz Herav, supplies a number of the young

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<sup>121</sup> "The Temple Institute Update," *The Gap* (January/February 1992), p. 8.

<sup>122</sup> Interview with James Tabor, March 23, 1992. Dr. Tabor appears to have some reservations about the direction of the Temple Mount activities, but appears to see himself as a non-Jewish voice for moderation. Conversation with James Tabor 25 May 1992.

<sup>123</sup> The sources of this dissent are unanimous in asking that their names not be used. The Neusner quote is from James D. Davis, "Faith and the Mountain," *Ft. Lauderdale Sun Sentinel*, 1 December 1991, p. E1.



idealists involved with the training for priestly service in the Third Temple.<sup>124</sup> At the same time, as we have seen, the B'nai Noah became involved with the extreme messianic tension current in the ranks of the Lubavitcher hassidim, which in turn brought them into the controversy surrounding President Bush's declaration of Education Day 1991, thus placing them on the agenda of the adherents of Christian Identity, and as a result introducing them to the White supremacist constellation as a whole. The B'nai Noah had, in effect, become at once a sign of and a key component of the End time drama. Yet all of this frenetic activity made hardly a ripple in the wider American culture.

It is with this internal view of the adherents of the Noahide movement that they are at once a sign and an agent of the Last Days that the major divergence of the millenarian/messianic aspects of the B'nai Noah with Christian Identity occurs. Most Christian Identity adherents view themselves merely as potential survivors of the Tribulation whose mission is to hold true to their identification with biblical Israel and to persevere through the imminent horrors of the Tribulation so as to be able to see with their own eyes the glory of the parousia. Yet no formulation of Identity doctrine, to my knowledge, posits Kingdom believers as in themselves constituting a sign that the End of Days is upon us.

Thus, Part II of this chapter will first examine the history of the Noahide Laws. Second, the contemporary implications of a single commandment, that forbidding idolatry, will be considered in an effort to explore the view shared by both Christian Identity theorists and many B'nai Noah that from the perspective of Noahide belief, Christianity itself is a form of idolatry. Finally, this chapter will consider the process by which the Noahide movement became an eschatological portent to the Identity Christian members of the millenarian community.

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<sup>124</sup> Eti Ronel, "Inside Israel: The Battle Over Temple Mount," *New Outlook* (February 1984), p. 12.

## Part II- The Search for Signs and Portents

*But as to suitable times and precise seasons and dates, brethren, you have no necessity for anything being written to you. For you yourselves know perfectly well that the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night. [1 Thessalonians 5:1-2]*

### Introduction

The process by which Identity Christians have come to identify the Noahide movement as a sign of the End is complex. It involves the selection of the B'nai Noah from a morass of current global events seen as pregnant with eschatological possibilities by clerical authorities, subjecting the movement to a process of hermeneutics through recourse both to inerrant text and widely accepted secondary sources, the dissemination of the results of this hermeneutical endeavor to the widely scattered community of Identity believers, and, finally, to the acceptance (or rejection) of the clerics' interpretation by the adherents themselves.

Before undertaking this examination however, it should be stressed that this process within Identity Christianity differs somewhat from that of the elements of the Jewish community who see the B'nai Noah as a herald of messianic redemption. Several reasons may be posited for this difference. First, the Identity community came across the B'nai Noah by its own resources, scanning the popular media for signs and portents, while as we have seen, the B'nai Noah went to often extraordinary lengths to bring themselves to the attention of the Jewish community. This is particularly important in that the adherents of Christian Identity are apocalyptic millenarians by definition, while the messianic aspirations of the Jewish community beyond Habad ranks are muted by the long historic memory of the disasters which have befallen the Jews in the wake of failed messianic

excitements.<sup>125</sup> Increasing this sense of Jewish wariness, as R. Katz has stated, is the fear of an anti-Semitic backlash resulting from B'nai Noah activities--and this too has often followed failed Jewish messianic movements.

For its part, there is a view within Habad that while the sudden upsurge of the Noahide movement is surely a sign of imminent messianic redemption, it is nonetheless a minor one. Of far greater eschatological import are internal signs within the Jewish community itself, in particular, the ingathering of the exiles from the former Soviet Union and elsewhere, as well as a perceived global trend toward isolating Israel, emphasizing its uniqueness among nations (Le. 20:24-26).<sup>126</sup>

While some elements of the Orthodox community have rallied to the B'nai Noah, accepting them as a prominent redemptive sign, others are not so sure. Among those who do find great eschatological importance to the Noahide movement, the most prominent textual reference is to Zechariah 8:23, quoted in the introduction to this chapter, holding that a small number of men from the nations will in the Last Days cleave to the Jews. Yet Orthodox rabbis accepting this interpretation appear to be few in number, and these have come to be closely identified with the movement itself.<sup>127</sup> Far more common is the view that while the B'nai Noah are important exemplars of proper moral conduct among Gentiles, redemption following the formulations of Isaiah 42:6 and 60:3 ("a light unto the

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<sup>125</sup> Abba Hillel Silver, *The History of Messianic Speculation in Israel* (New York: Macmillan & Co., 1927). Cf. Gershom G. Scholem, *The Messianic Idea in Judaism* (New York: Schocken Books, 1971). Today, R. Israel Chait, recalling this unfortunate history and while denying mystical leanings ("I'm very Maimonidian") and warning that we can not know what is in the mind of God, nonetheless finds the messianic implications of the sudden appearance of the B'nai Noah "very interesting." Interview with R. Israel Chait, 13 May 1992.

<sup>126</sup> Interview with Dov Ber Haskelovich 23 March 1992.

<sup>127</sup> Interview with Michael Katz, 26 March 1992. Interview with Israel Chait, 13 May 1992.

nations") is the primary concern of the Jewish community while questions concerning messianic redemption are most safely left to God alone.<sup>128</sup>

### The Noahide Controversy-A Brief History

*And the man said, Who made you a prince and judge over us? [2 Exodus 14]*

The adherents of Christian Identity see the historical development of the Noahide Laws in much the same way as do the B'nai Noah themselves. This despite the vast differences in education and approach which separate the adherents of each belief system.<sup>129</sup> It is commonly agreed for example that the term 'Noahide Laws' itself refers to a set of seven commandments said to have been revealed by God to Noah which is based on a juxtaposition of the covenants entered into by God with Noah in Genesis 9 and the earlier Adamic covenant of Genesis 2:16-17. Clearly, possible esoteric interpretations aside, the convergence of the Adamic and Noahide covenants yield only two definite

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<sup>128</sup> See for example, Rabbi Abraham Stone, "Expounding the Torah," *Jewish Press*, 13 December 1985; or Rabbi Dr. Samuel A. Turk, "Are We Our Brothers' Keepers?" *Jewish Press*, 14 February 1986.

<sup>129</sup> The B'nai Noah rely on rabbinical teaching, although some of them undertake the arduous task of Hebrew study and textual learning. James Tabor for example is a Ph. D. graduate of the University of Chicago in Early Christianity. Ph. D.s are rare commodities in the White supremacist constellation, and none seem to be in subjects relevant to scriptural studies. However, those who have them display them prominently. Witness Dr. William Pierce, the head of the neo-Nazi National Alliance, whose fictional works, *The Turner Diaries* and *Hunter* are standards in the more violent reaches of the movement. Dr. Pierce has a Ph. D. in physics from the University of Colorado. Dr. Ray Jurjevich is a Ph. D. psychologist from Denver whose literary fecundity is matched only by the rambling incoherence of his prose. Recent titles by Dr. Jurjevich, all available from ICTHTYS Books of St. Mary's, Kansas, include: *Aliens and the American Tragedy*; *U.S. Patriots, Victims of the ZOG*; *Christian Revolt*; *Long Overdue!*; *Masonry Condemned From Its Own Sources*; and *National Christian Manifesto*. For a good introduction to Dr. Jurjevich's work however, see Ratibor-Ray M. Jurjevich. *The Contemporary Faces of Satan* (Denver, Co.: ICHTHYS Books, n.d.). This volume is part of an 8 volume set titled *Demonic Maladies in the Western Culture: Freud, Marx, Skinner and Other Ugly Pagans*.

commandments: a ban on murder and certain dietary restrictions. Yet the juxtaposition of the two covenants were formulated in the Talmudic literature into a set of seven commandments<sup>130</sup> which came to be known as the Noahide Laws.<sup>131</sup> So well accepted did this formulation become that by the Middle Ages, Maimonides [or the Rambam, d. 1204] could confidently assert:

Six precepts were given to Adam: prohibition of idolatry, of blasphemy, of murder, of adultery, of robbery, and the command to establish courts of justice. Although there is a tradition to this effect--a tradition dating back to Moses, our teacher, and human reason approves of those precepts--*it is evident from the general tenor of Scriptures* [emphasis mine] that he (Adam) was bidden to observe these commandments. An additional commandment was given to Noah: prohibition of (eating) a limb from a living animal...<sup>132</sup>

Unremarkable in themselves, these commandments may have been a source of polemical contention between the Jews and the gentiles<sup>133</sup> as early as the debates held under the auspices of the Emperor Julian (361-363 C. E.).<sup>134</sup> The source of this heated

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<sup>130</sup> Sanhedrin 56-60 and Yoma 67b.

<sup>131</sup> The technical process by which the Noahides may have been constructed is demonstrated in David Novak, *The Image of the Non-Jew in Judaism*, Toronto Studies in Theology, Vol. 14, (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1983), pp. 3-6.

<sup>132</sup> Abraham M. Hershman, trans., *The Code of Maimonides: Book Fourteen, The Book of Judges*, tractate Kings and Wars, ch. IX, pp. 230-231.

<sup>133</sup> That the Noahides retain their value in Jewish/Christian polemic is demonstrated by Steven S. Schwarzschild, "Judaism, Scriptures and Ecumenism," *Judaism* 13 (Summer 1964), pp. 271-273, where the author uses the Noahide Laws as a riposte to the ecumenical outreach to the Jews emanating from Vatican II.

<sup>134</sup> Ephraim E. Urbach, *The Sages*, pp. 532-533; Robert M. Seltzer, *Jewish People, Jewish Thought* (New York: Macmillan, 1980), p. 286. An accessible English language translation of the relevant portion of Talmud is Michael L. Rodkinson trans., *New Edition of the Babylonian Talmud: Tract Sanhedrin*, Vol. VII and VIII (Boston: The Talmud Society, 1918), pp. 166-177. This early translation is offered in rebuttal to the belief prominent in the white supremacist literature that only Jewish source material dated prior to the 1920s is reliable. It was at this point that the *Dearborn Independent International Jew* series appeared, and many believe that from this time, an effort was made by Jews to cover

contention appears to be less the commandments than the universal application of the law envisioned by the rabbis of the day. This polemic, from the Jewish perspective, held that while the Torah and the 613 *halachic* laws were incumbent only upon the Jewish people, the seven Noahide laws constitute a minimal compact, obedience to which is binding upon all men.

Before examining in some depth the textual referents for the Noahide Covenant outlined by Maimonides above, it is important to digress briefly to consider the view of these texts among adherents of Christian Identity. The fear of, and hatred for, these texts among Identity Christians must be understood in a historical context which, hopefully, will demonstrate that their views too have a considerable antiquity, and that their formulations of these beliefs which may seem disquieting to the uninitiated, in point of fact have considerable historical resonance in the Christian West. A primary problem which arises from such a line of inquiry leads to the difficult question of the presence, or pervasiveness, of anti-Semitism in the pre-Christian era. While this chapter can not hope to offer any new insights, it is important to note that among adherents of the B'nai Noah movement, the existence of the God-fearers is held to be a key referent. It would be difficult to posit a widespread God-fearer movement arising among strongly anti-Semitic non-Jewish

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up any material or points of doctrine which would substantiate the allegations made in this series. This is a theme that recurs constantly in the material produced in the White supremacist world. Cf. Rabbi Dr. I. Epstein, trans. and ed., *The Babylonian Talmud*, Tract Sanhedrin, (London: Soncino Press, 1935). Contrary to the assertion that later translations of this text were modified to make the content less objectionable to a gentile audience, the Rodkinson translation makes apologies throughout for having excised certain discussions on sexuality which "we deem not fit for translation." See Rodkinson, p. 172 ff.

populations,<sup>135</sup> making the question of anti-Semitism in the pagan world of some importance to a discussion of the history of Christian hatred of Jewish texts.<sup>136</sup>

Whatever the case of anti-Semitism in the classical world, the world of medieval Europe has left a far clearer record. By the 13th century, the demonization of the Jew had proceeded to the point that the Inquisition turned its attention to Hebrew texts. While the works of Maimonides were banned and burned in Montpellier in 1232,<sup>137</sup> the real attention of the Holy Office was drawn to a far more formidable body of literature; the Talmud and related rabbinical writings. In an action that would be repeated many times in subsequent history, an apostate Jew, Nicholas Donin, in 1239 convinced Pope Gregory IX that the Talmud was anti-Christian. The result was an order to seize Jewish books in England, France, Castile, Aragon, Navarre, Leon, and Portugal. Following a brief examination and disputation, thousands of these volumes were burned in 1244 at Paris and Rome. The Talmud was formally banned in 1248.<sup>138</sup> This line of attack on the Talmud would continue into the modern period, with the 19th century volume by Rev. I. B. Pranaitis, *The Talmud Unmasked*, only the latest such work. Predating this work were such similar efforts as that in the 1550s, when the Talmud was again seized and destroyed in a number of Italian cities, and in mid-16th century Germany, where another converted German Jew, Johann Pfefferkorn raised the alarm.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Robert F. Tannenbaum, "Jews and God-Fearers in the Holy City of Aphrodite," *Biblical Archaeology Review* XII (September/October 1986), p. 57; and Louis H. Feldman, "The Omnipresence of the God Fearers," *Biblical Archaeology Review* XII, pp. 59-63.

<sup>136</sup> For a more traditional view arguing for the existence of pervasive anti-Semitism in the classical world, see J. N. Sevenster, *The Roots of Pagan Anti-Semitism in the Ancient World* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1975).

<sup>137</sup> Joshua Trachtenberg, *The Devil and The Jews* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1943), p. 178.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 178-179.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 179.

More widely read in Christian Identity circles than the Pranaitis volume is the 1940s work of Elizabeth Dilling, *The Plot Against Christianity*, which expanded upon the Pranaitis model. The Dilling text gathers together in a single volume virtually the entire corpus of the current Identity interpretation of Jewish texts--and of Jews themselves. The work includes reprints of the Talmud, Jewish encyclopedias, books by Jewish scholars, and local Jewish community newspapers.<sup>140</sup> So efficacious is the Dilling text believed to be in Identity circles that the recent Steinsaltz edition of the Talmud has been posited as the Jewish attempt to sanitize the Talmud for gentile readers in reaction to the Dilling expose.<sup>141</sup>

This brief recitation should be sufficient to demonstrate that Identity Christians are hardly the first to believe that the Talmud is a demonic and anti-Christian work. For a flavor of the Identity Christian perception of the Babylonian Talmud as derived from Elizabeth Dilling's material, the influential Colorado Identity pastor of the 1940s and 1950s, Kenneth Goff, in a tract entitled *'Tis Still Our Ancient Foe*, ties together most of the major themes in Dilling's work:

In Babylon, the whole character of Judaism was changed...In place of the temple and tabernacle they instituted a congregational worship called the synagogue...In place of the Old Testament teachings, they came out with the Babylonian Talmud, which became the new religion of Judaism from that day...One needs but to browse through the Babylonian Talmud to find within its pages the most filthy sewer of all human thinking. No human could conceive that a religious book would take up such a tremendous amount of space to discuss in lewd details the right of a rabbi to seduce a three-year-old baby girl. No other religious teaching has ever condoned sexual relations of a mother with her own son. No other religious teaching has ever endorsed the cursing of one's own parents or the burning of one's children to the God

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<sup>140</sup> *The Plot Against Christianity* is currently available through Willis Carto's Noontide Press as, Elizabeth Dilling, *The Jewish Religion; It's Influence Today* (Costa Mesa, California: Noontide Press, 1983).

<sup>141</sup> James W. Bruggeman, "The Sanitized Talmud," *Kingdom Chronicle* (October 1991), p. 5.



Moloch...No other religious teaching has called a woman from outside of its faith 'cattle', and has dealt with a woman in such filthy language. No other religious teaching has allowed sexual relations with a dead woman. No other religious teaching underwrites superstition and black magic such as carrying pulverized manure from a white dog around one's neck for certain cures, and many other forms so vulgar that they would be nonpermissible to print in these pages.<sup>142</sup>

How did Pastor Goff arrive at these formulations? Christian Identity, diverse as it is, has come to widely accept a particular dogma regarding Jewish religious texts. This view is repeated endlessly in the literature of Christian Identity.. A recent number of the rather cerebral Identity journal *The American Christian* from Medford, Oregon, edited by Pastor Ben Williams (a Sheldon Emry student), offers a good capsule summary of these beliefs. Opening with a refutation of the idea that the Jews of today are "the chosen People," *The American Christian* points out that the word Jew appears in the King James Version of the Bible some 265 times, and that an examination of the Hebrew and Greek texts demonstrates that the word is itself a corruption of "Judain," proving that the "word Jew didn't come into use until modern times among English-speaking people."<sup>143</sup>

Who then are these "Jews?" A range of texts were consulted: *The New Jewish Encyclopedia*; the *Universal Standard Encyclopedia* (1958, Vol. 14); H. G. Wells' *The Outline of History* (Vol. 1, Bk. VI, "Christianity and Islam"); the *Jewish Almanac* (p. 1, "Identity Crisis"); and finally, Arthur Koestler's *The Thirteenth Tribe*.<sup>144</sup> The conclusion of this examination is:

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<sup>142</sup> Quoted in James Coates, *Armed and Dangerous: The Rise of the Survivalist Right*, p. 85. Pastor Goff was the teacher of such first rank current Identity figures as Dan Gayman and Thom Robb.

<sup>143</sup> Keith McAlister, "Defining the Christian Image: A Christian Warrior Defends 'Christianity,'" *The American Christian* (March-April 1992), p. 2.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3. The fragmentary nature of of the references are given as written in *The American Christian*.

So the nonsense about the Jews being "God's Chosen" can go out the window based on their own admission. The "Chosen Jews" doctrine was taken up and perpetuated among so-called Christian leaders who teach that the terms "Hebrew," "Israelite," and "Jew" are synonymous. But as you can see, they certainly are NOT synonymous."<sup>145</sup>

It is but a short step then, from the view that those who call themselves Jews are imposters, to the view that any people capable of such an age old deception must be in some way demonic, and that if the people are demonic, what can be the nature of their religious texts be other than diabolic? How did this demonization occur? In a frequently reprinted text:

Louis Finkelstein, Professor of Theology at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, stated in his book, *The Pharisees*:

"Pharisaism became Talmudism, Talmudism became Medieval Rabbinism, and Medieval Rabbinism became Modern Rabbinism. But throughout these changes of name, inevitable adaptation of custom, and adjustment of Law, the spirit of the ancient Pharisee survives unaltered. When the Jew reads his prayer, he is reciting formulae prepared by pre-Maccabean scholars;...when he studies the Talmud, he is actually repeating arguments used in the Palestinian academies."<sup>146</sup>

The connection of the modern Jew to the Pharisee sends the researcher back to the encyclopedias to uncover more. In the process, *The New Jewish Encyclopedia* and Tyndale's *New Bible Dictionary* serve as sources for an examination of the Oral Law (Mishna and Talmud), and the Kabbala (including the Zohar), which leads naturally to the conclusion that:

In religious circles in ancient Babylon, the ancestors of those who now call themselves "Jews" departed from the Written Law and developed a hierarchy who wrote their own laws. They created their

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<sup>145</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid., pp. 3-4.

own interpretations of truth and law and, via religious control, removed the real truth from the eyes of the people. Claiming to be depositories of truth, these "leaders" became, to the Jews, the source for all instruction. As time went on, their falsehoods were promoted and accepted as divinely inspired.

There you have the root and branch of "Judaism." By identifying Judaism, we have also defined "Jew."<sup>147</sup>

Equally cerebral is a somewhat different approach to the Talmud taken by Pastor Earl Jones. Using a text by R. Ben [Zion] Bokser (*The Wisdom of the Talmud*), with some secondary assistance from Ammon Linder's *The Jews in Roman Imperial Legislation*, Pastor Jones constructs an argument based on the proposition that the Jewish conspiracy has already succeeded in perverting the American legal and social structures from their original basis of biblical Christianity to a Talmudically based welfare state run by a cabal of elite Jews and "Christian" plutocrats. Quoting Talmudic edicts from the Bokser text, Pastor Jones seeks to prove that the rabbis "found capital punishment reprehensible," and it is the Talmudic influence in America which is behind efforts to repeal capital punishment, which is biblically mandated of Christian government.<sup>148</sup> Talmudism too is found at the root of such issues as social welfare, gun control, and economic policy in general.<sup>149</sup> The success of this Talmudic conspiracy is, for Pastor Jones, no surprise. After all, he asserts in an often repeated view in Identity circles, the attack on Christian Anglo-Saxon beliefs and institutions began with the victory of William the Conqueror in 1066, for William brought with him from Normandy Jews (also referred to in some

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<sup>147</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>148</sup> Earl F. Jones, "Lesson in History, Part 10," *Christian Crusade for Truth Intelligence Newsletter* (September-October 1990), p. 3. Pastor Jones' view of the "Talmudic rabbis" abhorrence of capital punishment is especially ironic in light of his belief, chronicled below, that the implications of the Education Day resolution are to put Jews in a position to execute Christians for such acts of idolatry as the worship of the cross. The fragmentary nature of the references are given as written in *The Intelligence Newsletter*.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., pp. 4-5.

versions as 'aliens', 'outsiders', and 'international financiers',) to take control of the economic life of the conquered Anglo-Saxon peoples.<sup>150</sup>

Never far from this view of Jewish texts is the racial aspect of the modern Jew which is at the core of identity theology. Briefly, pointing to Arthur Koestler's *Thirteenth Tribe* as a proof text, Ashkenazic Jews are posited as in large measure the descendants of the Khazar tribe. In the most widely quoted phrases of that text:

...the large majority of surviving Jews in the world [are] of Eastern European--and thus perhaps mainly of Khazar--origin. If so, this would mean that their ancestors came not from the Jordan, but from the Volga, not from the Canaan but from the Caucasus, once believed to be the cradle of the Aryan race: and that genetically, they are more closely related to the Hun, Uigur and Magyar tribes than to the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Should this turn out to be the case, then the term 'anti-Semitism' would become void of meaning, based on a misapprehension shared by both killers and their victims.<sup>151</sup>

Koestler's theory is held in Christian Identity circles as determined fact, based perhaps as much on the fact that Koestler was a Jew as on the quality of his historical research. This would certainly fit the pattern of Jews or apostate Jews becoming the primary sources for anti-Semitic proof texts. Going farther however, Pastor Sheldon Emry traces the history of the Edomites from Esau through the Canaanite seed line until, at last, they were able to infiltrate true Israel as scribes and Pharisees, and thus were able to subvert true Israel from within. This Edomite line went on at the diaspora to join the ranks of the Khazar tribes to form the Synagogue of Satan which is Talmudic Judaism today.<sup>152</sup>

<sup>150</sup> Ibid., pp. 5-6. Cf. Richard Kelly Hoskins, *Vigilantes of Christendom*, pp. 17-19.

<sup>151</sup> Arthur Koestler, *The Thirteenth Tribe*, p. 17.

<sup>152</sup> Sheldon Emry, "An Open Letter to any Minister who teaches 'The Jews are ISRAEL,'" pamphlet from America's Promise Ministries, Phoenix, Az., 1968. This view is reprised in a special issue of *America's Promise Broadcaster*, one of Sheldon Emry's publications from Phoenix, Arizona. The issue is undated, but clearly was issued in 1976 or 1977, immediately after the publication of *The Thirteenth Tribe*. A reprint of this article is currently being circulated by John Harrell's Christian Patriot Defense League in Flora,

Finally, reinforcing these suspicions of the Talmud and other Jewish texts while taking them beyond the confines of Christian Identity, is the inveterate conspiracy theorist, Eustace Mullins. For Mullins (a student of Ezra Pound), the Babylonian Talmud mixed Israelite beliefs with elements of the many mystery cults current in Babylon in the sixth millennium B.C.<sup>153</sup> His formulations here are worth noting in that they provide the vital step linking the comparatively moderate views of Keith McAlister in *The American Christian* with the conspiratorialism of Earl Jones to at last arrive at the extreme views of Ken Goff which opened this exposition.

Because of its origins in the demon-worshipping capital of the world, Babylon,<sup>154</sup> demonology plays an important part throughout the text of the Talmud. It refers to the Demiurge, or chief demon, as the creator of the universe...

The Mishna taught in the second century B. C. that two things should never be revealed to the public, or the uninitiated, (1) the work of creation, and (2) the work of the chariot (meaning esoteric operations, "The Divine Throne"). These precepts became further formalized in the secret rites of Freemasonry.

In 1280 A. D., a further development of Talmudic thought, the Zohar, or Book of Splendour, appeared. This was known as the Cabal, or tradition. It was based on two things: (1) generation, or fertility rites, as the most sacred word in the new instructions...and (2) the precept that Israel alone is to possess the future world (Vayschleh folio 177b)...

In the Cabala, evil takes on a mysterious existence of its own, which its precepts [sic] trace back to the physical appearance of life on earth, or Adam. Cabal claims that Adam throws the entire stream of life out of balance, and that the Church, or Christianity, by

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Illinois. For a somewhat different theory in which the Essenes are posited as the last of the 'true Jews,' or members of the Judean tribe who had not mixed with gentile converts to form the 'Synagogue of Satan' (unlike the Pharisees and the Sadducees who did intermarry and who were tricked into following the Talmud rather than the Word of God), see Raymond Bray, "The Synagogue of Satan," undated pamphlet from the Lord's Work, Inc. of Austin, Kentucky.

<sup>153</sup> Eustace Mullins, *The Curse of Canaan: A Demonology of History*, p. 40.

<sup>154</sup> The themes of Judaism as a Babylonian perversion of Israelism and of the Jewish conquest of America have been combined recently to replace the epithet ZOG (Zionist Occupation Government) with the more evocative BOG (Babylonian Occupation Government). See any issue of *Jubilee*, the highly professional Identity newspaper issued by pastor Paul Hall in Midpines, California.

formalizing the existence of the Adamite peoples on earth, have become a problem which must be resolved. This is the essence of the basic anti-life principle underlying all Cabala and its heir, Freemasonry. These precepts declare that Satanism will achieve its final triumph over the Church and Christianity, thus ending the "dualism" of this world, the struggle between good and evil. In short, the problem of good and evil will be ended when evil triumphs over good and is eliminated from the earth.<sup>155</sup>

Eustace Mullins' presentation brings this examination full circle to the observation which began this section: that Identity Christianity too has considerable historical precedent for its views of Jews and Jewish texts. For with the Demiurge and the starkly manichaeic vision posited above as Talmudic, Mullins reopens a line of anti-Semitic thought associated with certain Gnostic Christian sects in the first centuries of Christianity. Here too, the Jews are seen as conscious servants of evil, in this case the Demiurge, to act for him on earth in his unceasing battle with the forces of the light. Arrayed against this Demiurge are such non-Jewish figures as Seth, Enoch, and Melchizedek.<sup>156</sup>

With this examination of Identity Christianity's view of the Jewish sources, this chapter turns to the sources themselves to seek the historical roots of the Noahide Covenant.

The first literary source of which we are aware, and the source for later mishnaic and talmudic consideration of the Noahide laws, is found in the Tosefta (supplement); a

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<sup>155</sup> Ibid., pp. 41-42.

<sup>156</sup> For a brief introduction to this line of early anti-Semitic thought, see Hyam Maccoby, "Anti-Judaism and Anti-Semitism," in *Contemporary Jewish Religious Thought*, Arthur A. Cohen and Paul Mendes-Flohr, eds., pp. 14-15. For a contemporary use of Melchizedek in the Identity polemic against the Noahide movement, see the presentation of Pastor Earl F. Jones below. The most important contemporary application of Melchizedek is in the Mormon Melchizedek priesthood. See *The Book of Mormon*, Alma 6-15. Cf. Margeret Bingman, *Encyclopedia of the Book of Mormon* (Independence, MO: Reorganized LDS Church, 1978), p. 227.

collection of pharisaic and mishnaic-era traditions which were not included in the Mishna:<sup>157</sup>

Seven commandments were the sons of Noah commanded: (1) concerning adjudication (*dinim*), (2) and concerning idolatry (*abodah zarah*), (3) and concerning blasphemy (*gilelat Ha-Shem*), (4) and concerning sexual immorality (*giluy arayot*), (5) and concerning bloodshed (*shefikhut damim*); (6) and concerning robbery (*ha-gezel*), (7) and concerning a limb torn from a living animal (*eber min ha-hy*).<sup>158</sup>

Tract Sanhedrin of the Babylonian Talmud<sup>159</sup> points to the difficulty of taking in isolation any particular doctrinal tenet from this convoluted body of rabbinical opinion. While the commentators in Sanhedrin do generally agree on a seven fold law as binding upon the B'nai Noah, the sources are in some disagreement as to what the pertinent seven commandments should be:

The rabbis taught: Seven commandments were given to the children of Noah, and they are: Concerning judges, blasphemy, idolatry, adultery, bloodshed, robbery, and that they must not eat of the member of the body while the animal is still alive. R. Hananiah b. Gamaliel said: Also the blood of the same. R. Hidka said: Also castration is forbidden to them. R. Simeon said: Also witchcraft. And R. Jose said: All that is forbidden to them in the portion on

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<sup>157</sup> David Novak, *The Image of the Non-Jew in Judaism*, p. 3. Novak dates the Tosefta at late 2nd century C.E., and Aaron Lichtenstein, *The Seven Laws of Noah*, p. 11, a primary source for the B'nai Noah, argues for the late 2nd century as well. Robert M. Seltzer, *Jewish People, Jewish Thought*, p. 265, more conservatively places the date of this text as anywhere between the 3rd and 5th centuries.

<sup>158</sup> David Novak, *The Image of the Non-Jew in Judaism*, pp. 3-4.

<sup>159</sup> The rabbinical authorities quoted in the relevant passages of Sanhedrin date from the 3rd to the 5th centuries, C. E. The actual redaction of the Babylonian and Palestinian Talmuds did not take place before the 6th century. For a discussion of the various theories of the redaction, see Julius Kaplan, *The Redaction of the Babylonian Talmud* (New York: Bloch Publishing Company, 1933). Cf. Robert M. Seltzer, *Jewish People, Jewish Thought*, pp. 260-267.

witchcraft [Deut. 18:10-12] shall be forbidden to a descendant of Noah.<sup>160</sup>

These sources too are in considerable disagreement as to the proper order of the Noahide Laws.<sup>161</sup>

Whatever the precise list of seven commandments, the key questions from the perspective of the Christian Identity concern the application of the death penalty to the B'nai Noah and the composition of the courts mandated for the enforcement of the Noahide code. Here too, the Babylonian Talmud is anything but clear. On the question of whose courts will be competent to try a son of Noah, the sources are contradictory. R. Ahu b. Jacob holds that:

Just as the Israelites were ordered to set up law courts in every district and town, so were the sons of Noah likewise enjoined to set up law courts in every district and town.<sup>162</sup>

A consensus however, does seem to emerge on the question of the comparative judicial competence of Jewish and gentile courts charged with the enforcement of the Noahide Code, holding with R. Johanan, that "it makes no difference in which court he should be tried."<sup>163</sup>

The contemporary observer of this legal argument will be excused for the perception of an air of unreality surrounding the entire debate. One respected contemporary

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<sup>160</sup> Michael L. Rodkinson trans., *New Edition of the Babylonian Talmud: Tract Sanhedrin*, Vol. VII and VIII, p. 168.

<sup>161</sup> Aaron Lichtenstein, *The Seven Laws of Noah*, p. 15.

<sup>162</sup> Rabbi Dr. I. Epstein, trans. and ed., *The Babylonian Talmud*, Tract Sanhedrin, 56b, p. 385.

<sup>163</sup> Michael L. Rodkinson trans., *New Edition of the Babylonian Talmud: Tract Sanhedrin*, Vol. VII and VIII, p. 172.



halachic authority argues that: "In the Jewish Commonwealth, separate judiciaries were established: one exercised jurisdiction over the Jewish populace and administered Jewish law while the other sat in judgement upon non-Jewish nationals and rendered justice in accordance with the provisions of the Noahide Code."<sup>164</sup> The problem with this formulation however, is that the Noahide Code appears considerably to postdate the Commonwealth. The same argument must be made in response to theories suggesting that the brief reign of the Hasmonians [c. 140-63 C. E.] may have occasioned the imposition of Noahide Law.<sup>165</sup>

If indeed the Noahide Code was never enacted on a practical level, what are we to make of the detailed rabbinical debate as to the establishment of courts, rules of evidence, and consideration of problems of jurisdiction and competence? It is impossible to posit an answer to this question with any certainty, but it would appear that the two major practical effects of the Noahide debate were, in the short term, to regulate the internal communal aspects of Jewish interaction with non-Jews.<sup>166</sup> Secondly, but perhaps of greater importance to the commentators, was the belief that the debate was not a matter of sterile academic disputation, but would serve as a source for the future when the Noahide Covenant could and would be implemented, i.e., in the messianic era to come. Indeed, this would appear to be the intent of the commentary of the 14th century French cabalist, R. Menaham Meiri:

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<sup>164</sup> J. David Bleich, "Jewish Law and the State's Authority to Punish Crime," *Cardozo Law Review* 12 (February/March 1991), p. 831.

<sup>165</sup> This suggestion has been offered by the *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, volume 8, (New York: Works Project Administration, 1942), p. 227. Even under the conditions of the Exile, there remains a body of scholarly opinion, albeit a minority one, which takes the position that the Noahide Code could have been applied somewhere by someone. See *Encyclopedia Judaica*, volume 12 (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing, 1971), p. 1189. The suggestion that the Noahide Code was applied to someone somewhere is repeated, more in hope than in conviction, by Suzanne Last Stone, "Sinaitic and Noahide Law: Legal Pluralism in Jewish Law," *Cardozo Law Review* 12 (February/March 1991), p. 1163.

<sup>166</sup> David Novak, *The Image of the Non-Jew in Judaism*, pp. 60-64.

Every Noahide whom we see, who accepts upon himself the seven Noahide commandments, is one of the saints of the nations of the world and is in the category of the religious and he has a portion of the world to come.<sup>167</sup>

Such an interpretation would appear a reasonable explanation for the sporadic attention given to the practicalities of the Noahide Code over the centuries,<sup>168</sup> juxtaposed to the considerable attention given the question of imposing a court system on the Children of Noah by Maimonides and other medieval sources.<sup>169</sup> More, it would be difficult to posit an hypothesis which held for a practical application of the Noahide Laws that would account for the impossible rules of evidence or for the complete impotence of the Jews to establish a court system which would be binding even on the Jewish community itself, much less on a gentile population.<sup>170</sup> Maimonides held that indeed the Jewish courts were enjoined to appoint judges over the population of resident aliens under their authority,<sup>171</sup> while Noahides not under Jewish control are nonetheless obligated to appoint judges over

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<sup>167</sup> Ibid., p. 351.

<sup>168</sup> Arnold N. Enker, "Aspects of Interaction Between The Torah Law, The King's Law, And the Noahide Law in Jewish Criminal Law," *Cardozo Law Review* 12 (February/March 1991), p. 1153.

<sup>169</sup> It is probably significant in this context that the Rambam's discussion of Noahide law immediately precedes his discourse on the coming of Messiah. Abraham M. Hershman, trans., *The Code of Maimonides: Book Fourteen, The Book of Judges*, tr. Kings and Wars, ch. IX-XI.

<sup>170</sup> Arnold N. Enker, "Aspects of Interaction Between The Torah Law, The King's Law, And the Noahide Law in Jewish Criminal Law," p. 1139, raises precisely this question. David Novak, *The Image of the Non-Jew in Judaism*, pp. 53-83 too addresses the problem. Jonathan Z. Smith in a conversation with the author makes this point as well. The answers posited vary, but no source, including the most enthusiastic proponent of Noahide Law, Nahum Rakover, is able to point to any documented post-Exilic instance of a practical application of the Noahide Code. Nahum Rakover, "Jewish Law and the Noahide Obligation to Preserve Social Order," (February/March 1991).

<sup>171</sup> Nahum Rakover, "Jewish Law and the Noahide Obligation to Preserve Social Order," p. 1120.

themselves to enforce the remaining six Noahide Commandments.<sup>172</sup> Yet Maimonides was well aware that in the pre-messianic era, Jews could do nothing to either establish courts or to enforce in any way the Noahide code on a recalcitrant population.<sup>173</sup> Even the rulings enjoining the appointment of judges were offered in the context of a commentary on the dire retribution taken by the sons of Jacob in response to the rape (or seduction) of Dinah [Gen. 34].<sup>174</sup>

The death penalty for transgression of the Noahide Laws is, like the question of the theoretical Jewish imperative to set up judges and courts of law over the gentile nations, a point which is central to the Identity Christian interpretation of the current Noahide controversy. Here it must be stated at the outset that the consensus of the rabbinical authorities does indeed hold that death must be meted out to anyone violating at least some of the Noahide commandments (although again, the sources disagree on precisely which of the Laws should be at all times and in all places capital crimes).<sup>175</sup>

Rabbi Ya'akov bar Aha found in Sefer Aggadeta deVei Rav: "A descendant of Noah may be put to death on [the ruling of] one witness, without formal preliminary warning [that his crime is a capital offense]. The witness must be a male but may be a relative." In the name of Rabbi Ishmael, it is said "[a] descendant of Noah may be put to death for feticide as well."<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> Ibid., p. 1122. More practical was the view of Naimonides, who held that it was not for Jews to judge Noahides who refuse to judge their own unless specifically requested to do so by the contending parties. Ibid., pp. 1123-1126.

<sup>173</sup> David Novak, *The Image of the Non-Jew in Judaism*, p. 277.

<sup>174</sup> Nahum Rakover, "Jewish Law and the Noahide Obligation to Preserve Social Order," pp. 1120-1130. Cf. Aaron Lichtenstein, *The Seven Laws of Noah*, pp. 31-43.

<sup>175</sup> David Novak, *The Image of the Non-Jew in Judaism*, pp. 169-175.

<sup>176</sup> Sanhedrin 57b. Quoted in Nahum Rakover, "Jewish Law and the Noahide Obligation to Preserve Social Order," p. 1086.

The sources too disagree on the method of execution, with some holding for strangulation<sup>177</sup> and others for decapitation.<sup>178</sup>

The Rambam deals at some length with this question. For Maimonides, the theoretical punishment for transgression of any of the six prohibitions of the Noahide Code is, with some exceptions made for exculpatory circumstances, death.<sup>179</sup> More, the primary justification for the behavior of the sons of Jacob in reprisal for the unfortunate experience of Dinah was the failure of the men of Shechem (Hivites) to establish a court to try Shechem for his transgression.<sup>180</sup> Additionally, the Rambam makes clear that the application of the penalty of death is different for Jews and Noahides, with Noahide crimes held to be capital offenses in far more instances than for a Jew guilty of a similar offense.<sup>181</sup> It is precisely this scenario of Jewish or Jewish controlled courts exacting on Christians the ultimate penalty for transgressions of the Noahide Code which forms the heart of the Identity Christian indictment of the current Noahide movement. Lost in this polemic however, is once again the key elements of Maimonidin praxis:

A Noahide who inadvertently violates any of the commandments is exempt from all punishment...<sup>182</sup>

A Noahide who is coerced by a man of violence to transgress any of the commandments mandatory upon him, may transgress it. Even if

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<sup>177</sup> *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, Volume 8, p. 227.

<sup>178</sup> *Encyclopedia Judaica*, Volume 12 (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing, 1971), p. 1191; and *Jewish Encyclopedia*, Volume VII (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1912), p. 649.

<sup>179</sup> The relevant texts are conveniently gathered in Aaron Lichtenstein, *The Seven Laws of Noah*, in which the death penalty for transgression of each of the Noahide Laws is considered.

<sup>180</sup> David Novak, *The Image of the Non-Jew in Judaism*, p. 54.

<sup>181</sup> Abraham M. Hershman, trans., *The Code of Maimonides: Book Fourteen, The Book of Judges*, tr. Kings and Wars, ch. IX-X, pp. 230-238.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. X, 1, pp. 234-235. Deliberate murder is the major exception to this. In practice, all Noahides are ignorant of the Noahide Code.

he is forced to worship idolatry, he may do it, because Noahides are not commanded to sanctify the Name (of God).<sup>183</sup>

What the sources leave us with then, is a detailed collection of rulings mandating death for a range of transgressions, and insisting moreover on the power of Jewish courts or of gentile courts under Jewish control to enforce these rulings. However, practical safeguards render the entire corpus of statutes effectively moot! More, we can speculate that while the coming of the Jewish Enlightenment in the 18th century and the steady inroads of secularization and assimilation into the surrounding Gentile society caused the Noahide Code to become less important for the emergent *maskilim* ['enlighteners'], they demonstrably remained a serious topic for scholarly discussion, and not only in the yeshivas of the Orthodox.

One recent commentator indeed traces the Noahide debate from its Talmudic origins, through the medieval commentators, to such influential contemporary figures as R. Abraham Isaac Kook, the first Chief Rabbi of mandatory Palestine and the spiritual father of the contemporary Israeli settlement movement Gush Emunim, and finally to the current Lubavitcher Rebbe, Manachem Schneerson.<sup>184</sup>

From the days of Maimonides then, the Noahide Laws have clearly not fared well in the consciousness of the majority of Jews. The process by which a central strand of religious belief is lost by all but the most austere guardians of the tradition is common enough, although the explanation for the survival of some elements of a tradition and the

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<sup>183</sup> Ibid., ch. X, 2, p. 235. As governments were (and are) conceived of as instruments of coercion controlled by men of violence, in theory, any Noahide following the laws of the land is excused from adherence to the Noahide Code, *even if he is aware of its existence*.

<sup>184</sup> Nahum Rakover, "Jewish Law and the Noahide Obligation to Preserve Social Order." It should be noted that, although it is beyond the scope or interests of this chapter, Rakover's article is one of several which have appeared in response to a recent boom(let) of interest in the Noahide Code by the legal community due to the Rambam's speculations on the relationship of the Noahide code to the subject of natural law.

loss of other, once vital tenets is speculative at best. Perhaps the most adequate hypothesis, at least for the Abrahamic traditions, centers on the availability to the adherent of inerrant text supported by authoritative exegetical material. For the Noahide debate, this seems to be the key factor. The Old Testament mentions the Noahide covenant only in Genesis 9, where God specifically commands mankind to obey only two prohibitions: those forbidding murder and a dietary restriction on the eating of an animal still containing blood. This is reprised in the New Testament [Acts 15:20, 29] by three prohibitions (idolatry, sexual impurity and dietary restrictions), which brought the Noahides into subsequent Christian discourse.<sup>185</sup> The rest, including the dread penalty for disobedience, enjoys no such presumption of inerrancy. And with the modern day diminution of the authority of these religious virtuosi, the Noahides gradually came to be lost to all but the most devoted cadre of followers of rabbinical teachings.<sup>186</sup>

A contemporary rabbi, deemed by many the greatest Talmudist of the modern age, R. Joseph Dov Soloveitchik, illustrates the controversy from the perspective of modern Yeshiva orthodoxy:

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<sup>185</sup> Indeed, this is a primary basis for James Tabor's theory that early Christianity was in fact an apocalyptic Noahide movement. Interview with James Tabor 26 March 1992. Cf. James D. Tabor, "B'nai Noach: The Reappearance of the God-fearers in our Time," unpublished, privately circulated article (1990).

<sup>186</sup> This process is common to the three peoples of the book. In a strikingly similar scenario in Islam, belief in the Islamic 'Antichrist', the Dajjal, evolved from a terrifying reality of daily life much feared by the Prophet and his early companions (*ansar*) in sixth century Arabia, into a monster of unimaginable proportions in medieval Islam, only to be forgotten by all but the most credulous (with stories intended to frighten naughty children figuring prominently) among Muslims today. This is in stark contrast to Islamic beliefs in Iblis, the Devil, or the Djinn, the fire spirits who exist, largely invisible, in our world, which are essentially unchanged from the archetypes of the Meccan period. The difference seems to stem from the fact that unlike Iblis or the Djinn, the Dajjal appears nowhere in the inerrant *Qu'ran*, and is noted primarily in the important but non-inspired *hadith* literature. See my unpublished "The Dajjal Legend." Cf. Steve Wasserstrom. "The Moving Finger Writes: Mughira ibn Sa'id and the Interplay of Past and Future in the Institutionalization of the Dajjal Myth," *History of Religions* 25 (August 1985).

Rabbinic interpretation of the Covenant made with Noah (Gen. 9) deduces the seven Noahide Laws whose observance is obligatory for all gentiles, while the Jew is enjoined to fulfill a more stringent and demanding discipline. Gentiles governed by those seven laws are judged worthy of eternal life... <sup>187</sup>

We opened this consideration of the historical development of the Noahide code by noting the fourth century Jewish/gentile polemic. On the Christian side of the debate, there does not appear to have been great concern with the Noahide question.<sup>188</sup> The Pseudepigrapha for example, retains only two mentions of the Noahide Covenant,<sup>189</sup> both faithful to the Genesis 9 formulations. The concept of the Noahide covenant itself does not seem to have figured prominently in the thinking of the early fathers of the Church, nor did it have the same resonance among the medieval authorities that it enjoyed

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<sup>187</sup> Rabbi Joseph Dov Soloveitchik, "Transcriptions of My Lectures by Rabbi Abraham Besdin," in *Man of Faith in the Modern World: Reflections by the Rav* (Hoboken, N.J.: Ktav Publishers, 1989), p. 76. Another student of R. Soloveichik, R. Shlomo Riskin of the West Bank settlement of Efrat, notes the importance of this covenant, and of Sanhedrin 56a, to the Rav's thought: Shlomo Riskin, "Three Biblical Covenants," *Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 27 October 1990, p. 23.

<sup>188</sup> It is interesting to note that the *Qu'ran* does not retain the details of the covenantal relationship with Noah, despite an entire *sura* (*al-Nuh* 'the Noah') devoted to his story. For Muslims, the prime lessons to be learned from the flood epic are of the obedience and submission of Noah to God. See *al-Safat* [Those Ranged in Ranks] 78-79:

And we left (this blessing)  
For him among generations  
To come in later times:  
"Peace and salutation to Noah  
Among the Nations!"

Elsewhere, the ark itself rather than the rainbow as in the biblical formulation, is offered as the proof of Divine favor. See *al-Qamar* [the Moon] 15 and *al-Haqqa* ['sure reality'] 11-12. *al-Qu'ran*, Yusuf Ali trans., (Jeddah, Saudi Arabia: Dar al-Qiblah, 1453 Hijra).

<sup>189</sup> There may in fact have once been a psuedepigraphic "Book of Noah," but this had long since been absorbed into the Enoch literature, and survives today as part of the second century B. C. Book of Jubilees and in the first century A. D. Psuedo-Philo. On the historic development of these texts, see Neil Forsyth, *The Old Enemy: Satan & The Combat Myth*, pp. 161-163, 183-185. The passages themselves may be found in James H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Psuedepigrapha* Vol. 2, (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1985), pp. 66-67, 307 and 328.

in the thought of Maimonides, Nahmonides or Meir. Rather, in the mystical and apocalyptic speculations of the great Calabrian abbot, Joachim of Fiore [d. 1202], a contemporary of Maimonides, the real importance of Noah was less his covenantal relationship per se than his temporal location in the divinely ordained schema of time leading to Christ's blessed return:

Saint Augustine, when he discussed the ages in *The City of God*, said that there was one age from Adam to Noah, another age from Noah to Abraham. When he said this, he added: "Not because the second age has the same number of years as the first, but because it has the same number of generations," These *tempora*, therefore, ought not to be reckoned according to their number of years but according to their generations...<sup>190</sup>

In other words, in Jewish terms, the Noahide Covenant was used primarily to 'count the end'.

Among Christians in the post-Enlightenment period, the Noahide Covenant would arouse renewed interest among those Protestant theologians concerned with using the Bible to divide history into a series of discrete units of time, or dispensations, leading up the parousia. The earliest formulation of dispensationalist theory, mostly concerned with the Adamic covenant, was a minority trend in 17th century Dutch Pietism championed by a Leyden professor of theology named Johannes Cocceius [d. 1669]. Cocceius, remembered (if at all) today as the father of Federal Theology,<sup>191</sup> argued for the then novel position that the system of grace pervades the Old as well as the New Testament, and gave dispensationalist theory much of its modern form.<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>190</sup> Bernard McGinn, trans. and ed., *Apocalyptic Spirituality*, Classics of Western Spirituality, (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), p. 134.

<sup>191</sup> D. H. Krominga, *The Millennium in the Church* (Grand Rapids, Mi.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1945), p. 204.

<sup>192</sup> George Park Fisher, *History of Christian Doctrine* (New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1923), pp. 348-349.



Modern Dispensationalism is credited to the founder of the Plymouth Brethren, the British cleric John Nelson Darby [d. 1882].<sup>193</sup> Darby divided history into a series of seven consecutive dispensations. These dispensations, accepted in turn by Dwight L. Moody, William E. Blackstone,<sup>194</sup> and C. I. Scofield [d. 1921], are:

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<sup>193</sup> Glenn T. Miller, "Dispensationalism," in *The Perennial Dictionary of World Religions*, Keith Crim, ed., (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, San Francisco, 1981), p. 224. Christian Identity has consciously sought to distance itself from American dispensationalism, possibly due to the sympathy demonstrated by many adherents of these beliefs for the Jews and for Israel as a central feature of premillennial eschatology. Perhaps this distancing is as well part of an effort to erect ideological barriers between Identity and the fundamentalist community which many current Identity Christians rejected in accepting the truth of the Identity message. It is not surprising therefore, that dispensationalists from Darby to C. I. Scofield would come to be woven into an Identity based conspiracy theory of history. This was done most recently by Earl F. Jones of Deming, New Mexico, with the claim that this line of dispensationalist thinkers were conscious agents of the World Revolutionary Movement, a Jewish backed conspiratorial group which is gaining world domination for the Jews with the help and cooperation of a hereditary group of non-Jewish plutocrats who profit immensely from participation in this diabolic cabal. Earl F. Jones, "Lesson in History, Part 7," *Christian Crusade for Truth Intelligence Newsletter* (March-April 1990), p. 8. This plot came a step closer to fruition in Pastor Jones' view with the passage of the Noahide resolution in Public Law 102-14. This observation was presented as a digression by Pastor Jones in the context of a discussion of the interaction of C. I. Scofield with one of the prime movers of the American phase of the conspiracy, Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis. Earl F. Jones, "Lesson in History, Part 15," *Christian Crusade for Truth Intelligence Newsletter* (November-December 1991), p. 5.

Not all Identity pastors however, dismissed Scofield's dispensational scheme so easily. Typical of those of an earlier generation who built upon dispensationalist theology was Dr. Alexander Schiffner who, in 1963, embraced the Scofield 8-point scheme, building an argument that set him--ironically--squarely in the majority camp of the 1948 World Council of Churches capitalism vs. communism debate: that both systems are almost equally corrupt! Of course, Dr. Schiffner bases his analysis on a premise which would have appalled the good theologians gathered at Amsterdam:

Both capitalism and communism started in the Garden of Eden...  
God puts His finger on our capitalism and the Kremlin's  
communism. They are like two peas in a pod, in that each obtained  
what it has illegally according to God's standards.

Dr. Alexander Schiffner, "The Beginning and the End of Communism and Capitalism," *Prophetic Herald* 24 (April 1963), pp. 2-3. On the WCC debate in Amsterdam, see David P. Gaines, *The World Council of Churches* (Petersborough, New Hampshire: Richard R. Smith Noone House, 1966), pp. 288-297.

<sup>194</sup> Blackstone of all of the 19th and early 20th century dispensationalist figures was most closely identified with Christian Zionism and a sincere, if somewhat missionary tinged, philo-Semitism. On this interesting figure, see Yaakov S. Ariel. "American Premillennialism and Its Attitudes Towards the Jewish People, Judaism and Zionism, 1875-1925." Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1986.

1. Age of Innocence [Eden to the Fall]
2. Age of Conscience [Fall to the Flood]
3. Age of Human Governance [Noahide Covenant]
4. Age of Promise [Abrahamic Covenant]
5. Age of Law [Mosaic Covenant]
6. Age of Grace [Covenant established through Christ]
7. The Millennium<sup>195</sup>

Each successive covenant is seen by dispensationalists as having been abrogated through man's disobedience, with the final act of disobedience posited as ending the Age of Grace, ushering in the horrors of the Tribulation from which the elect will be spared, rising to meet Jesus in the air according to the blessed doctrine of Rapture.<sup>196</sup>

The *Scofield Reference Bible*, first published in 1909 and later updated in 1967, was clearly the most important event in the dissemination of dispensationalist beliefs.<sup>197</sup> Left unsolved in dispensational theology is the problem that, even though the Noahide

<sup>195</sup> Glenn T. Miller, "Dispensationalism," in *The Perennial Dictionary of World Religions*, p. 224. Cf. George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 242, n. 21; and Tim Weber, *Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming*, pp. 13-42.

<sup>196</sup> Glenn T. Miller, "Dispensationalism," p. 224. Identity violently rejects Rapture as a trick of "Judeo-Christianity" to pacify and disarm the Christian remnant.

<sup>197</sup> George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, p. 119. Although it is not well known, there are currently efforts among fundamentalist and evangelical biblical scholars to revise the Darby/Scofield dispensational scheme. One of the more interesting is that currently being pursued by a California minister, and graduate of the Dallas Theological Seminary, Ray C. Steadman. Arguing that Scofield was in error in equating dispensations with time, he holds that dispensations should refer to: (1) The source or instrument of the Word; and (2) The state of knowledge and spiritual development of that source, as well as that of the wider community in which the prophet lived. This has the practical effect of elevating the spiritual authority of the Jews, as what living Christian could, Steadman asks, hope to match the spiritual development of the Old Testament prophets? Ray C. Steadman, "Dispensationalism," unpublished transcript of an address to the congregation of Peninsula Bible Church, Palo Alto, Ca., 21 May 1972. Other reformulations of dispensationalist thought are being carried on by the Reconstructionist thinker Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr. under the banner of Gary North's Institute for Christian Economics. The primary aim of this effort seems to be to discredit the temptation, too often engaged in by premillennialists, to "count the End." See the monthly newsletter "Dispensationalism in Transition."

Covenant is known as human government, few specifics are offered as to the precise nature of the law which is to govern the Third Dispensation. Scofield offers only this observation:

Man is responsible to govern the world for God. The responsibility rested upon the whole race, Jew and Gentile, until the failure of Israel under the Palestinian Covenant (Deut. 28-30:1-10) brought the judgement of the Captivities when "the times of the Gentiles" began, and the government of the world passed exclusively into Gentile hands. That both Israel and the Gentiles have governed for self, not God, is sadly apparent. The judgement of the confusion of tongues ended the *racial* testing, that of the captivities the *Jewish*; while the *Gentile* testing will end with the smiting of the image (Dan. 2) and the judgement of the nations (Mt. 25: 31-46).<sup>198</sup> [all emphasis original]

Interest in the Noahide laws appears to have passed from the clerical commentators to a handful of secular philosophers and scientists in the post-Enlightenment period as well.<sup>199</sup> And finally, it was precisely the literal biblical formulation of the Covenant, forbidding only the taking of animal life and the eating of animal blood, which found its way into the most influential texts of nineteenth century Anglo-Israelism, the direct forerunner of today's Christian Identity.<sup>200</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> C. I. Scofield, *Scofield Reference Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1909), p. 16.

<sup>199</sup> Most notably, Hugo Grotius, who in the early seventeenth century made the Noahides a basis of his theories of natural law, possibly making the Noahides an indirect influence on the U.S. constitution, and ironically validating the thesis of the Education Day proclamation signed by President Bush. Too, an eighteenth century English theologian, John Toland, posited the Noahides as the key link between Judaism and Christianity. *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, volume 8, p. 228. On Grotius, cf. Aaron Lichtenstein, *The Seven Laws of Noah*, p. 5, n. 6. Ironically, Grotius is quoted in an uplifting factoid in an issue of the *Jubilee* Christian Identity newspaper which features as its lead headline an attack on the Noahide Laws. *Jubilee* 4, March/April 1992, p. 18.

<sup>200</sup> John Wilson, *Our Israelite Origin*, p. 32.

### Aimé Pallière

The most immediate Christian precursor of the current B'nai Noah was the French Catholic convert to Noahidism, Aimé Pallière (1875-1949). Pallière's spiritual evolution began with an intense Catholicism, progressed to a strong attraction to Judaism, detoured to the Salvation Army, before being introduced to the concept of Noahidism by the rabbi of Leghorn, Italy, Elijah Benamozegh (1823-1900).<sup>201</sup> The "movement" begun by Pelliére, in fact more an ecumenical discussion group than a movement, bore some resemblance to the current activities of the B'nai Noah. There was the same outreach to publicize the belief system, given of course the lack of desktop publishing forcing articles and books to meet the rigorous publication standards of the day. These early publications and public discussions brought the welcome attentions of the popular press, and letters began to pour in from around the world.<sup>202</sup> There was too the same highly intellectual approach to the subject, prominently featuring study of the Hebrew language. Among those Christians sympathetic to the Noahide concept, there was then as now great doctrinal flexibility, allowing each adherent to take from Judaism beyond the seven laws whatever he or she may wish.<sup>203</sup> There was as well an identical historical conclusion that Christianity is merely a form of messianic Judaism which, purged of Hellenistic thought, would return to

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<sup>201</sup> This tortuous spiritual journey is recounted in Pelliére's autobiography; Aimé Pallière, *The Unknown Sanctuary: A Pilgrimage From Rome to Israel*, Louise Waterman Wise, trans., (New York: Bloch Publishing Co., 1928). The key documents in this text, the letters written by R. Benamozegh, are reproduced in Aaron Lichtenstein, *The Seven Laws of Noah*, pp. 7-11.

<sup>202</sup> Aimé Pallière, *The Unknown Sanctuary: A Pilgrimage From Rome to Israel*, p. 204. A similar pattern of press interest leading to public interest was noted above through the current press outreach of the B'nai Noah.

<sup>203</sup> Aimé Pallière, *The Unknown Sanctuary: A Pilgrimage From Rome to Israel*, pp. 150-151; James Tabor, "B'nai Noach: The Reappearance of the God-fearers in our Time," privately circulated article (1990), pp. 4-5.

the pure Hebraism which Pelliére conceived to be the essence of modern Judaism.<sup>204</sup> One difference too is worth noting. Palliére and his circle came from Catholic backgrounds--indeed, at least one adherent, Péré Hyacinth, was a Catholic priest, while most of the current American B'nai Noah come from fundamentalist Protestant backgrounds, bringing with them a far more literal attachment to text, to inerrancy, and a somewhat more manichaeian view of the world than would have occurred to Palliére.

Palliére's activities were halted by the Nazi occupation of France, while the condition of European Jewry in these years was hardly conducive to the sort of close cooperation mandated by Noahide beliefs. Palliére did however survive the war, emerging to complete an Italian version of his book, *Il Santuario Sconosciuto*, which was published three years after his death in 1949.<sup>205</sup>

Aimé Palliére's life, and the book which recorded his spiritual journey, serve today as models for the B'nai Noah. What emerges from a close reading of Pallier's work is the conclusion that the central doctrine of Noahidism centers around the prohibition against idolatry, and that all other Noahide laws flow from obedience to this over-arching precept. This aspect of Noahide Law will be considered below.

### On Idolatry

Of the seven Noahide laws, the most important in the view of both the the B'nai Noah and of Identity Christians concerns the prohibition against idolatry. Here, there appears to be a remarkable convergence of views, with adherents of both groups concluding that from the perspective of the Noahide movement, Christianity is in fact a

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<sup>204</sup> Aimé Palliére, *The Unknown Sanctuary: A Pilgrimage From Rome to Israel*, p. 180; Interview with James Tabor, 23 March 1992.

<sup>205</sup> Aaron Lichtenstein, *The Seven Laws of Noah*, p. 11, n. 19.

form of idolatry, and is thus prohibited to anyone seeking "a share in the life to come."<sup>206</sup> So important is the concept of idolatry that Maimonides<sup>207</sup> restates an ancient tradition when he holds that: "The commandment against idolatry is (the equivalent of) all (other) commandments...and anyone who rejects idolatry thereby accepts the entire Torah."<sup>208</sup> For one contemporary source, the commandment to abjure idolatrous behavior constitutes the only strictly religious duty incumbent on Noahides.<sup>209</sup> A brief examination of the historical development of the idolatry doctrine in the Jewish sources however, demonstrates that the question is not so simple.

Idolatry<sup>210</sup> as forbidden to the Jewish people may reliably be traced to the Decalogue,<sup>211</sup> although it is considerably less clear when this prohibition was extended to non-Jews as well. In all likelihood, the sources did not shift their emphasis from the basic

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<sup>206</sup> On the Identity hermeneutics, see "Blessing or Curse," *Smyrna* (July/August 1991); or Earl F. Jones, "Public Law 102-14," *Christian Crusade for Truth Intelligence Newsletter* (July-August 1991), pp. 2-4. On the views of the B'nai Noah: Interview with Michael Katz, 26 March 1992; Interview with R. Dov Ber Haskelevich, 23 March 1992; Interview with R. Israel Chait, 13 May 1992; and "Rabbis Differ in their Reaction to David Davis' B'nai Noah," *The Jewish Voice and Opinion*, June 1991.

<sup>207</sup> A good primary source detailing Maimonides' views on the question of idolatry is H. M. Russell and Rabbi J. Weinberg, trans., *The Book of Knowledge From the Mishnah Torah of Maimonides* (Edinburgh: Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, 1981), pp. 70-108.

<sup>208</sup> Stephen S. Schwarzschild, "De Idolatria," in David Novak and Norbert M. Samuelson, eds., *Proceedings of the Academy for Jewish Philosophy* (Lanham, Ma.: University Press of America, 1992), p. 236, n. 51.

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 213.

<sup>210</sup> Idolatry is defined for the purposes of this chapter in accordance with the formulation found in Ex. 20:3 (You shall have no other gods before or beside Me). When addressed by the philosophers, predictably, complications arose. On this debate, see for example *Ibid.*, p. 213; or Elliot N. Dorff, "In Defense of Images," in David Novak and Norbert M. Samuelson, eds., *Proceedings of the Academy for Jewish Philosophy*, pp. 129-131.

<sup>211</sup> Ex. 20:26 and Dt. 5:6-10. Barry S. Kogan, "Judaism and the Varieties of Idolatrous Experience," in David Novak and Norbert M. Samuelson, eds., *Proceedings of the Academy for Jewish Philosophy*, p. 169.

assumption that gentiles were irredeemably idolatrous by nature to a more positive determination to turn non-Jews away from idolatry until the formulation of Noahide Law.<sup>212</sup> When the question of gentile idolatry was addressed in the biblical period, it was posited in terms of regulations incumbent on the resident alien (*ger toshab*), and significantly in terms of the current B'nai Noah/Christian Identity polemic, was at all times linked to the concept of Jewish suzerainty.<sup>213</sup> The early rabbinical literature considered the question of turning gentiles toward monotheism, but this consideration was theoretical at best, and tended toward the view that this blessed eventuality would take place in the context of a general conversion at the dawn of the messianic era.<sup>214</sup>

The first serious discussion of combatting gentile idolatry appears to stem from the talmudic literature, and in particular the Babylonian Talmud.<sup>215</sup> In the Babylonian Talmud, the concept of the Noahide code of law is first fully explicated, as is the theoretical sanction of death for transgressors. And while as we have seen, both the Noahide Code and the penalty of death never left the realm of the theoretical, the acceptance of the Talmudic literature as normative within diaspora Judaism had the practical effect of gradually changing the rabbinic view from one of ceding to gentiles a virtual licence to engage in idolatry until the onset of the messianic era to one which saw gentile society as

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<sup>212</sup> David Novak, *The Image of the Non-Jew in Judaism*, pp. 108, 112.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid., pp. 113 and 152, n.37 and 39. Cf. Ex. 18:11-12; Josh. 2:9-11; Is. 2:3, 56:3 and 6:8; Micah 4:1-4; and Zech. 8:20-23.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid., pp. 114-115.

<sup>215</sup> Earlier discussions in the Mishna, in the aggadic literature, and in the Palestinian Talmud as well, seem to center more on dietary restrictions than on the question of idolatry per se. Ibid., pp. 115-117. This is consistent with the view of Jonathan Z. Smith as well. He points out in conversation that the biblical source of the Noahic covenant itself centered primarily on dietary restrictions. The specific sourcing of the idolatry legislation in the Noahide code, tractate Sanhedrin 56-60, was considered in the context of the historical development of the Noahide Laws above.

one which is not necessarily inherently idolatrous in nature.<sup>216</sup> This opened greater possibilities for Jewish interaction with their gentile hosts, but as well it stimulated a discussion of the sanction of death for transgression of the Noahide Covenant which took on an increasing liveliness over time.<sup>217</sup>

Increased interaction with host communities brought Jews into greater dialogue with pagan society on the one hand, and of greater importance, with Christianity on the other. The view of the early rabbinical authorities in this context is (relatively) unambiguous. This view is well expressed by R. Tarfon, a first century C.E. source, who ruled that pagan idolaters were better than Christians (or perhaps Gnostics, the reference is unclear) in that pagans disavow God through ignorance while Christian idolaters "know him and yet deny him."<sup>218</sup> This quotation raises a key question for this chapter: Is, in the view of the Noahide Covenant, and for that matter of Judaism as a whole, Christianity in fact tantamount to idolatry?

While the contemporary B'nai Noah hold that this is the case, and Identity Christians are aware of this, the sources tend to be more nuanced. The most important relevant doctrinal issues are Christological; in particular the Trinity, the incarnation, the broader association of Jesus with the Godhead, and to a lesser extent, on the veneration of

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<sup>216</sup> Ibid., p. 124.

<sup>217</sup> Aaron Lichtenstein, *The Seven Laws of Noah*, pp. 59-64. Lichtenstein is a key source, as this text appears to have considerable influence among the B'nai Noah. The reasons for this may be largely a function of its comparative simplicity, its length (only 103 pages of text compared, say, to Novak's 416 pages of scholarly prose), and its appealing style. But Lichtenstein devotes much of his text to consideration of Maimonides, and it was in this source that the death penalty was most discussed. The impact of a work like this on those conditioned by a lifetime of Protestant fundamentalism to a slavishly literal reading of text is a matter of speculation. But lost in Lichtenstein's presentation is the needed emphasis on the obvious fact that in practice, the Jews were in a position to put nobody to death. Indeed, the evidentiary laws in tractate Sanhedrin suggest that with each step the condemned is to take towards the place of execution, he must be allowed to turn back to the court to see if new exculpatory evidence has been produced! The laws concerning witnesses too make a conviction on any charge a practical impossibility.

<sup>218</sup> Ephraim E. Urbach, *The Sages*, p. 26.



saints. Early rabbinical sources tended to view Christianity as idolatrous by definition,<sup>219</sup> but this view came by the Middle Ages to be modified considerably. In this period, a consensus seems to have arisen that Christianity occupied a middle ground between pure idolatry and the perfect monotheism of the Jews.<sup>220</sup> Indeed, going further, medieval thinkers from Maimonides to Judah HaLevy argued that both Islam and Christianity had vital roles to play in providential meta-history, holding that God had brought both belief systems into being so as to prepare the ground for the imposition of pure monotheism on the world during the messianic era.<sup>221</sup>

The doctrinal elements of Christianity which from a Jewish perspective would suggest the possibility of idolatry were handled in different ways. The majoritarian trend among European rabbinical authorities argued that if only Christians would follow the ethical mandates of the Noahide Code, even the Trinity and the Cult of Saints are allowed to them.<sup>222</sup> This eminently practical view avoids the logical inconsistency stemming from a simultaneous rejection of both the divinity of Jesus and the efficacy of the celestial court of saints, juxtaposed to the insistence that those who engage in such worship are not by definition idolaters. Be this as it may, the consensus of rabbinical authorities from the medieval period to date, knowing full well that they lacked the power to influence their Christian neighbors and that Jewish survival, already tenuous, depended on a modicum of

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<sup>219</sup> Alfred L. Ivry, "The Inevitability of Idolatry," in David Novak and Norbert M. Samuelson, eds., *Proceedings of the Academy for Jewish Philosophy*, pp. 195-196.

<sup>220</sup> David Novak, *The Image of the Non-Jew in Judaism*, p. 138.

<sup>221</sup> Stephen S. Schwarzschild, "De Idolatria," pp. 224-225. It should be noted that both of these figures lived in Islamic lands, and argued that while Christianity has elements of idolatrous worship, Islam was a pure monotheism, notwithstanding of the Muslim veneration for the Qa'ba.

<sup>222</sup> For this view, see David Flusser, "Christianity," in *Contemporary Jewish Religious Thought*, Arthur A. Cohen and Paul Mendes-Flohr, eds., pp. 61-66.

sufferance on the part of the gentile nations, prudently ruled that for non-Jews, Christianity did not constitute a form of idolatry.<sup>223</sup>

This rabbinic exercise in diplomacy however, did not obviate the very real doctrinal difficulties presented by Christianity. Here too, distinctions were drawn. For example, the veneration of saints was viewed as a lesser problem than the central doctrines of the Trinity, associationalism and the incarnation.<sup>224</sup> This problem was addressed more comfortably from the safety of Moslem lands, most notably by Maimonides. For him, idolatry consisted most dangerously of what may be termed associationalism (Heb. *shittuf*), that is, the association of anyone or anything with God. It is this association of Jesus with God which is at the root of the development of the Trinity--and the incarnation itself--into central Christian doctrines.<sup>225</sup>

We are thus left with a dichotomous view; while in Christian lands the Jew is not to regard Christianity as idolatrous, but at a safe remove, to think of at least some aspects of Christian doctrine as idolatry. This view is illuminated by the circumspection of Elijah Benamozegh, the 19th century rabbi of Leghorn, whose letters to the early convert to Noahidism, Aimé Pallière are a primary source for today's B'nai Noah. At no time does this authority state, either in writing nor apparently in conversation, that Christianity is in

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<sup>223</sup> Stephen S. Schwarzschild, "De Idolatria," pp. 222-223. Conversely, if Jews converted to Christianity, they were deemed guilty of idolatry.

<sup>224</sup> David Novak, *The Image of the Non-Jew in Judaism*, p. 134. In the folk practice of both Jews and Muslims, the veneration of the tombs of saints was common. Indeed, putting an end to this practice was one of the primary aspects of the 18th century mission of Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab, the founder of the Wahhabiyya sect which is dominant in modern Saudi Arabia. See "Wahhabis," in Cyril Glasse, *The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam* (San Francisco, Ca.: HarperSanFrancisco, 1989), pp. 414-416.

<sup>225</sup> San. 38a. For the best discussion of the term, see David Novak, *The Image of the Non-Jew in Judaism*, pp. 133-138. For its application in terms of Maimonides' thought, see Stephen S. Schwarzschild, "De Idolatria," p. 223.

any way idolatrous. Rather: "You can remain within this Christianity, on condition, of course, that it be reviewed and corrected by the Jewish priesthood."<sup>226</sup>

R. Benamozegh suggests however, that the problem with Christianity that is most in need of correction centers on Christology:

As to the person of Jesus...that on condition that divinity be not attributed to him, there would be no reason whatever not to make him a prophet, to consider him a man charged by God with an august religious mission, without because of this altering any part of the ancient word of God, and without abolishing for the Jews the Mosaic Law, as his disciples pretended to do, misrepresenting his explicit teachings. see Matthew V, 17-19.<sup>227</sup>

In other words, the central thrust of Noahidism, then as now, is to de-divinise the person of Jesus.<sup>228</sup> Failing this, what is left, it is stated implicitly in the 19th century and explicitly today, is a perception of Christianity as in essence a form of idolatry, based on its associationalism, the incarnation, and on the Trinity itself. This view is in some rabbinical quarters being stressed more forcefully than in the past in the context of a renewed polemical debate with Christianity. Thus, the late Steven Schwarzschild, a rabbinical figure who has been writing about the Noahides since the early 1960s and who is a major source for the contemporary B'nai Noah movement,<sup>229</sup> can write:

My own view is, however, that, since we are no longer living in the Christian Middle-Ages, and neither even atheism nor the candid condemnation of idolatry is at all likely to bring life endangering

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<sup>226</sup> Aimé Pallière, *The Unknown Sanctuary: A Pilgrimage From Rome to Israel*, p. 152.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid., pp. 136-137.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid., p. 158.

<sup>229</sup> *Root and Branch Noahide guide 1991/5752*, p. 32.

consequences upon us,<sup>230</sup> [the line of decisions holding Christianity to not be idolatrous] should be treated as what it was--a *hora'ah leshe'ata*, "a temporary, prudential measure," which has long since lost its power.<sup>231</sup> This is so especially, I wish to argue in view of the fact that the single most important Jewish and human truth is at stake--the uniqueness, the incomparability of God and the morality necessarily entailed by that truth.<sup>232</sup>

Clearly, Christian Identity theorists are not wrong in their supposition that in Jewish eyes, and in particular in the view of those involved in the Noahide movement, Christianity is seen as idolatry. More, at least in theory, death is the penalty to be paid by idolaters, and as the previous discussion of the history of the Noahide Covenant found, the putative courts empowered to exact this punishment will be either Jewish or under Jewish control. To Identity Christians, imbued with a manichaeian view of the world, and convinced that history is a conspiratorial process in which the master conspirator is the shadowy figure of the "elite Talmudic Jew," the notion that the death penalty, or indeed that the Noahide Covenant itself, was never more than theoretical, is a meaningless prevarication. For a sure proof that the apocalypse is imminent is the perception that the world is getting worse, that the timeless conspiracy of the Jews against the people of

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<sup>230</sup> This is the precise wording adopted by R. Israel Chait to express the view that Christianity may now be safely proclaimed to be idolatry. Interview with R. Israel Chait, 13 May 1992.

<sup>231</sup> Once again, this dissimulative practice, enjoined by prudence on a religious minority, has strong parallels in Islam. The Shi'ite doctrine of *taqiyya* 'dissimulation' has a similar history and intent. So deeply ingrained has the practice of *taqiyya* become that in an internal communal polemic not unlike that of R. Schwarzschild, Imam Khomeini urged his students to abandon the practice in the changed historical circumstances of the 20th century. On the history of *taqiyya*, see S. H. M. Jafri, *The Origins and Early Development of Shi'i Islam* (London: Longman, 1979), pp. 298-300. For a translation of the relevant lecture by the Ayatollah Khomeini in his Najaf exile, see Imam Khomeini, *Islam and Revolution*, Hamid Algar, trans., (London: KPI, 1985), p. 144.

<sup>232</sup> Stephen S. Schwarzschild, "De Idolatria," p. 223. It should be noted that Schwarzschild does condition his view with the provisos that Christians need not be treated as idolaters (based on Deut. 23:8 that even Edomites should be treated as brothers) and that as long as Christians live morally by abiding by the other six Noahide Laws, logically, they can't be in serious violation of the law of idolatry.

God, the remnant of true Israel is only now coming to fruition. The Noahide movement is interpreted by Identity theorists as just such a sign of the End. How that determination was made will be the focus of the remainder of this chapter.

### Discerning the Signs: Christian Identity and the Hermeneutics of Apocalypse

#### George Washington's Prophetic Vision

*The goyim are a flock of sheep, and we are their wolves. And you know what happens when the wolves get hold of the flock? [Protocol 11 of the *Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*] <sup>233</sup>*

George Bush's proclamation of Education Day and the official embrace of the Noahide Laws constituted a political event which passed all but unnoticed by the majority of Americans. To the millenarian adherents of Christian Identity however, this congressional act constituted a fulfillment of prophesy, offered visible evidence of an ancient Jewish plot to subjugate and enslave the Christian world, and demonstrated the final consolidation of Jewish control over the government and institutions of the United States.

The identification of apocalyptic signs by Identity theorists are very much a product of the rigorous process of hermeneutics to which every idea entering the world of the white supremacist millenarians is subjected. These interpretations are conducted through a recourse to inerrant scripture and prestigious secondary texts, with the result of this endeavor then being passed along through the medium of newsletters, cassette sermons, "Kingdom Conferences" and Bible camps, and simple word of mouth, to be accepted, modified, or simply rejected by the consumers of Identity thought.

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<sup>233</sup> Victor E. Marsden, trans. and ed., *The Protocols of Zion* (n. p., 1934), p. 180.

It is a process of selection which has been typical of Identity Christianity throughout its existence. Christian Identity casts an extraordinarily wide net in its search for tenets of belief, partaking of such diverse sources as Protestant fundamentalism, various occult beliefs and practices, such "New Age" ideas as pyramid cultism, health faddism, and the like, as well as various forms of anti-Semitism and racial mythology.<sup>234</sup> With so wide a field of sources, it is not surprising that Identity theology is a remarkably diverse belief system, with every Identity pastor welcome, and indeed expected, to offer a highly individualistic view of the world. Yet the world of Christian Identity does at times come to adopt a particular tenet of belief as unquestioned dogma.

A prime example of such a belief that through the complex process of selection, hermeneutics and dissemination became an accepted 'fact of life' among Identity adherents is the alleged "Vision of George Washington." Where this belief originated is at this writing impossible to reconstruct. According to the tale itself, the vision was related by one Anthony Sherman to Wesley Bradshaw on 4 July 1859. Mr. Sherman was at the time 99 years old, and was in 1777 with George Washington at Valley Forge. The vision itself refers to a dream that Gen. Washington related to Sherman. In highly allusive language, Washington recounts that "a singularly beautiful female" came to him in his sleep, and addressing him as "Son of the Republic," guided him through a series of apocalyptic visions whose central motif involves the American republic engulfed in the tribulations of war and famine. The cause of these fearful scenes is suggested by "a shadowy angel" who placed "a trumpet to his mouth and blew three distinct blasts; and taking water from the ocean, he sprinkled it upon Europe, Asia and Africa." From these continents arose a black and terrible cloud, which settled to earth and resolved into armed men "who moving with the cloud, marched by land and sailed by sea to America, which...was enveloped by the

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<sup>234</sup> Michael Barkun, "Racist Apocalypse: Millennialism on the Far Right," pp. 136-137.

volume of the cloud." America is fated to survive this tribulation according to the vision, but only so long as the Republic keeps faith in God, the land and the union.<sup>235</sup>

A common source for the many reproductions of this vision appears to be a September, 1958 reprint from Howard Rand's *Destiny* magazine, published in Merrimac, Mass. The *Destiny* reprint contains an anonymous<sup>236</sup> editorial introduction which does much to illustrate the selection process by which ideas are floated, subjected to hermeneutical examination, and then either accepted or rejected by the Identity community:

Editors Note: The Vision of George Washington related to Anthony Sherman at Valley Forge has been published a number of times in former issues of *Destiny Magazine* over the past 27 years. However, in every case the edition of *Destiny* in which it was published quickly sold out. In *Destiny* for December 1957 reference was made to this vision in commenting on the racial issue the Supreme Court of the United States dropped into our midst. It was pointed out editorially that the feeling engendered as a result could become a major contributing factor that would involve the colored race, for the father of our country, George Washington, saw Africa as one of the continents to be joined with Europe and Asia in the final troubles which would afflict us. Due to the demand, we are again publishing this vision and, in doing so, we are following the style of handling as it appeared in *Destiny* for July 1950 when we quoted a dispatch from Rome as evidence that the vision is coming true.<sup>237</sup>

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<sup>235</sup> Contemporary sources recounting this vision are numerous throughout Christian Identity. See for example Washington's vision in such diverse contexts as "George Washington's Vision" *Aryan Nations Newsletter* 7 (c. 1978), p.1,7; John Harrell, "George Washington's Vision and Prophecy for the United States of America," flier lacking date or publication data currently distributed by both John Harrell's Christian Patriot Defense League (CDPL) and Jack Mohr; and "The Washington Vision," *Newsviews*, undated flier distributed by the Joppa Gospel Tabernacle & Kinship Ministries of Baltimore, Maryland.

<sup>236</sup> For a document of this importance, it is probably safe to assume that the venerable Howard Rand wrote this introduction, and did much of the research on the pedigree of the document. For a moving eulogy of Rand, who died on 17 October 1991 at the age of 102, see Michael A. Clark, "Howard B. Rand-The Greatest Identity Pastor Of Our Time Has Passed To His Rest," *Wake Up!* 9 (January/February 1992). *Wake Up!* is the organ of the Christian Israel Foundation of Ayrshire, Scotland.

<sup>237</sup> "George Washington's Vision," mimeographed reprint from *Destiny Magazine* of September 1958. This article traces the earliest known source of the vision to Charles A. L. Totten's September 1898 *Our Race Leaflet*. On Charles Totten, see Michael Barkun,

So thoroughly accepted is the Washington's Vision belief in Identity circles today that it is invoked as a call to action as well as functioning as a hermeneutical device. In the process, George Washington himself has been elevated within Identity discourse to the level of a prophet. Thus, where John Harrell and Jack Mohr use the vision as a survivalist appeal,<sup>238</sup> C. A. "Eddie" Seckinger, President of the Christian Anti-communist Party and guiding force behind the alleged formation in an unnamed foreign country of the Adamite Army, uses it as a call to arms, assuming that every recipient of his appeal will already be familiar with the belief. The quotation below is reproduced as written, grammatical and punctuation flaws included:

The Adamite Army is being build outside the United States of America to come to the AID of the American People when they are on their knees, as it is written in the last part of Washington's vision.

The United States would never permit us building this Army on American soil as they would be afraid we would try to over throw their government The Christian Anti-Communist Party has no desire to over throw any body or Country, We only want to do our part when the whole world comes up against that great Nation.

The most part of this Army want speak english but you don't have to be afraid of these people for they are MORE American than the Americans are they will be in the States to FIGHT for HER, not like Alot of YOU DAMNED DIRTY AMERICANS WHO HAVE SOLD YOUR OWN COUNTRY FOR A FEW DAMNED JEW NOTES HOW LOW CANT A PERSON GET?...<sup>239</sup>

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"From British Israelism to Christian Identity: The Evolution of White Supremacist Religious Doctrine," *Syzygy*, p. 56.

<sup>238</sup> John Harrell, "George Washington's Vision and Prophecy for the United States of America."

<sup>239</sup> Undated fund raising letter from C. A. "Eddie" Seckinger. An accompanying letter expounds further on Washington's Vision, stating explicitly: "George Washington was not just the first president of the United States, but he was a prophet also..." See C. A. "Eddie" Seckinger, "What Is to Happen to the United States and Why," undated paper from the Christian Anti-communist Party.



While Washington's Vision has achieved the status of unquestioned dogma in Christian Identity theology, other appeals such as the alleged Anti-Semitic warnings of Benjamin Franklin or the "vision" of General McClellan have failed to achieve such widespread acceptance.<sup>240</sup> More, even so hallowed a source as *The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion* has in some areas of the movement been downgraded somewhat in status.<sup>241</sup> With this introduction to the process of selection by Identity adherents, to their discernment of signs of the imminent End, as well as to the fluidity of Christian Identity theology today, a consideration of the Noahide Laws controversy from an Identity perspective can be undertaken.

### Christian Identity Discovers the Noahides

The Noahide Laws, and the B'nai Noah movement, came to the attention of the adherents of Christian Identity for the first time when President Bush signed Public Law 102-14 on 20 March 1991 and the *Wall Street Journal* article appeared on the same day. To the millenarian adherents of the White supremacist movement, this act constituted both a

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<sup>240</sup> Benjamin Franklin's prophesy may be found in Gerald L. K. Smith, *Satan's New Testament* (Los Angeles, Ca.: The Christian Nationalist Crusade, 1975), p. 24. It is frequently reprinted in various right-wing sources, and is currently being circulated by Family Farm Preservation (in reality the remnants of the Posse Comitatus) in Tigerton, Wisconsin. See "Benjamin Franklin Warned Against Jews," undated mimeographed sheet containing a special report on Jewish ritual murder today. The McClellan vision is in fact an extension of the Washington vision, with Gen. Washington coming to Gen. McClellan in a dream in his "Son of the Republic" guise to confirm that the Civil War was predicted in his original vision, and that the worst, in the form of a global onslaught against America, was yet to come. The original source of the vision is claimed to be the 8 March 1862 edition of *The Evening Courier* of Portland, Maine. The article in its current form is credited to an undated article by one Pastor Curtis Clair Ewing, and is distributed in the form of a double sided mimeographed sheet by Pastor Grant H. "Wings" Barker of The Gospel of the Kingdom Mission in El Cajon, California.

<sup>241</sup> Interview with Dan Gayman, 9-11 December 1991.

prime sign of the imminence of the End, and proof positive that ZOG, the Zionist Occupation Government, had at last consolidated its hold on America.

The resolution itself, composed of 10 paragraphs of lofty platitudes,<sup>242</sup> contains two operant passages: "...the ethical values and principles [which] have been the bedrock of society from the dawn of civilization ...[were then] known as the Seven Noahide Laws;" and a two paragraph tribute to R. Menachem Mendel Schneerson on the occasion of his eighty-ninth birthday, which fell on March 26, 1991.<sup>243</sup>

Interestingly, none of the seven Noahide laws would find much disagreement throughout the American right wing today. Together however, and sourced to the Babylonian Talmud so feared by these adherents as diabolic, the Noahide laws are absorbed into a manichaeian framework through which the millenarian believers in this milieu already view the development of the putative post-cold war New World Order. The impact of the Education Day resolution was further magnified by the revelation in the

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<sup>242</sup> The text of the resolution has been reprinted verbatim in a number of sources. The B'nai Noah offer the text in *The Root and Branch Noahide Guide* 1991-5752, p. 56. The source for the following quotes is Earl F. Jones, "Public Law 102-14," *Christian Crusade for Truth Intelligence Newsletter* (July-August 1991), pp. 2-5. Pastor Jones' material on this subject has been widely reprinted throughout the movement. Cf. "Do None Dare Speak for Fear of the Jews?" *The American's Bulletin* 2 (February 1992), p. 9. *The American's Bulletin*, a newspaper centering on anti-Semitic themes and the kind of legalisms dear to the hearts of the adherents of the Posse Comitatus, reprints much of Pastor Jones' brief reprise of the Noahide controversy which appeared in his *Christian Crusade for Truth Intelligence Newsletter* (November-December 1991), p. 1. The Identity and the B'nai Noah texts are identical.

<sup>243</sup> Rabbi Schneerson has long been an object of some considerable controversy in Israel. At the root of this often bitter polemic is the assertion often made by the enemies of the Lubavitcher Rebbe and his movement, never actually denied by R. Schneerson and his followers, that the Rebbe sees himself in messianic terms, if not as the literal messiah. In the wake of the gulf war, this messianic undercurrent has among the Lubavitchers become increasingly overt. A recent article in the *New York Times* quotes R. Joseph Aronov, the Lubavitcher's executive director: "I am certain that he [Schneerson] will be with us, and come together with us, as the messiah." The same article reports that it is said that some disciples have taken to carrying "beepers" so as to be informed instantly when the messiah is revealed. See "Prayers in Israel for Brooklyn Rabbi," *New York Times*, 7 March 1992, p. 5. The charge made by these critics center on the dread epithet of "Sabbatism," a comparison of Schneerson with the seventeenth century false Messiah, Sabbatai Zevi.

publicity surrounding the resolution's signing that there was already a Noahide sectarian movement gaining converts among Christians. Worse, primary texts known and uncritically accepted by Christian Identity adherents, seem to have predicted, on the basis of a selective retrieval from the Babylonian Talmud, precisely such an apocalyptic event as the adoption as law of the Noahides by the Christian West. In Rev. I. B. Pranaitis' *The Talmud Unmasked*,<sup>244</sup> a number of such passages are given special prominence. It is however, necessary only to offer examples which deal specifically with aspects of the seven Noahide laws [all emphasis below in original]:

#### VII. THOSE WHO KILL CHRISTIANS SHALL HAVE A HIGH PLACE IN HEAVEN

In Zohar<sup>245</sup> (I, 38b, and 39a) it says:

"In the palaces of the fourth heaven are those who lamented over Sion [sic] and Jerusalem, and all those who destroyed idolatrous nations...and those who killed off people who worship idols are clothed in purple garments so that they may be recognized and honored."<sup>246</sup>

#### VIII. JEWS MUST NEVER CEASE TO EXTERMINATE THE GOIM; THEY MUST NEVER LEAVE THEM IN PEACE AND NEVER SUBMIT TO THEM

In Hilkoth Akum (X, 1) it says:

"Do not eat with idolaters, nor permit them to worship their idols; for it is written: *Make no covenant with them, nor show mercy unto them* (Deuter. ch. 7),

2) Either turn them away from their idols or kill them."<sup>247</sup>

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<sup>244</sup> Rev. I. B. Pranaitis, *The Talmud Unmasked*, pp. 83-84. Elizabeth Dilling's *The Plot Against Christianity* reprises at greater length the themes derived from Pranaitis.

<sup>245</sup> The Zohar is in fact part of the 13th century Kabbalistic literature, and was probably written by Moses de Leon of Castile. It is written in the form of a pseudepigraphic work, set in the Bar Kochba period (2nd c. C. E.) and written in the name of a prominent figure of the talmudic literature, R. Simon bar Yohi. It is however, decidedly not a part of the Talmud. See Robert M. Seltzer, *Jewish People, Jewish Thought*, pp. 428-429.

<sup>246</sup> Rev. I. B. Pranaitis, *The Talmud Unmasked*, p. 83.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid., p. 83.

Apparently to insure that the reader does not fail to understand that the idolaters referred to above are in fact Christians, and to imply that the cross is thus seen in the Talmud as constituting an idol, the *Talmud Unmasked* closes with several specifically anti-Christian quotations:

In Zohar (I, 25a) it says:

"The people of the earth are idolaters, and it has been written about them: Let them be wiped off the face of the earth. Destroy the memory of the Amalekites. They are still with us in the Fourth Captivity, namely, the Princes [of Rome]...who are really Amalekites."<sup>248</sup>

While the *Talmud Unmasked* may be credited with helping to create the atmosphere in which the Noahide laws could be interpreted as a prime sign of the End, it could not have done so in isolation. Rather, there is a large body of anti-Semitic literature which could be presented to validate elements of the Christian Identity hermeneutical approach to the Noahides.<sup>249</sup> Of these, none is as influential in addressing the issues raised by the Noahide controversy than *The Protocols of Zion*. From this text, it will be necessary to abstract but a single element: the question of judges, and specifically, the inherent right claimed by the "Elders" to judge the gentile nations.

Under our influence, the execution of the laws of the *goyim* has been reduced to a minimum. The prestige of the law has been exploded by the liberal interpretations introduced into this sphere. In the most important and fundamental affairs and questions judges decide as we dictate to them, see matters in the light wherewith we enfold them for the administration of the *goyim*, of course, through

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<sup>248</sup> Ibid., p. 80. The Amalekites are used to this day in Jewish polemic as a term of ultimate contempt. It occurs in times of particular tension in the literature of the Israeli settlement movement Gush Emunim for example. See Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism: The Bloc of the Faithful in Israel (Gush Emunim)," in Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, eds., *Fundamentalism Observed*.

<sup>249</sup> Norman Cohn, *Warrant for Genocide*; Elizabeth Dilling, *The Plot Against Christianity*

persons who are our tools though we do not appear to have anything in common with them...<sup>250</sup>

The core texts constituting the basis of the millenarian right's understanding of the Noahide controversy, from Genesis through Jubilees to the the *Protocols*, all suggest to the adherent a powerful strain of manichaeism; a starkly dualist struggle of the forces of good against the forces of darkness. In this view, all events form a chain of causation which can not but bring to fruition the most dire predictions of imminent apocalypse. Such interpretations were not long in coming from throughout the white supremacist constellation. While it is impossible to state with certainty precisely who was the first to sound the alarm, a remarkably similar group of themes quickly made their way through the underground maze of newsletters, bulletins, cassette sermons and Kingdom meetings, forming a sort of apocalyptic orthodoxy which serves to illustrate the linkages binding the diverse ideological elements discussed below into a coherent subculture. What then, were a representative sampling of the hermeneutics of the Noahide movement?

Two senior Identity figures seem to have dominated the interpretation of the Noahide controversy; Earl Jones in New Mexico and Gordon Ginn in California. Earl Jones, a prestigious Identity pastor and conspiracy theorist, admits the possibility that the signing of the Noahide Bill has no eschatological implications--even as he demolishes this notion. Pastor Jones goes on to remind his readers of the radical secularization which has taken prayer and the Ten Commandments from America's schools, and contrasts the replacement of "now illegal" Christmas creche scenes with public displays of the Chanukah menorah (which have occasioned no legal repercussions).<sup>251</sup> Pastor Jones then examines

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<sup>250</sup> Victor E. Marsden, trans. and ed., *The Protocols of Zion*, Protocol 15, p. 196.

<sup>251</sup> This refers to the long standing controversy which has most recently flared in San Diego, California over the 3 December 1991 Federal Court ruling that two large crosses situated on public property (Mt. Helix and Mt. Soledad) violated the separation of church and state and must therefore be removed within 90 days. Taken in conjunction with a series of rulings dating from 1984 banning creche scenes from public property, this suspected attack on Christianity has been contrasted with the silence accompanying the

each of the noble sounding Noahide commandments in the light of their possible implications for Christians. It is an examination replete with villains and knaves, from J. David Davis to the "*sayanim*s (those volunteers for Zionism working in the congressional offices of Washington)" who "received their orders from the Nazis (Zionist Princes) and Congress bit hook, line and sinker."<sup>252</sup>

How clever the proponents of these innocuous sounding laws were can be seen from the implications of each, according to Pastor Jones' analysis. For example, the prohibition of blasphemy against God could hardly be rejected by any Christian--at least until one recalls that Jesus was put to death by the Pharisees on exactly this charge. Remember he warns, just who will be sitting in judgement of whom under such laws. And given the conspiratorial nature of the Jew taken as a given in Identity circles, what better 'Trojan horse' than the Noahide laws could be found to subordinate Christian Americans to their Jewish overlords?<sup>253</sup>

Pastor Jones credits another newsletter, *Smyrna*, for bringing Public Law 102-14 to his attention.<sup>254</sup> *Smyrna*, a modest Identity newsletter published in Fortuna, California, is the vehicle for Gordon Ginn, Ph. D., the current Religion Editor of the National Religious Foundation. Dr. Ginn has since had his name taken off the journal. The reasons for this reveals much about the psychology of the movement: "...*Smyrna* no longer places the name of its editor on the masthead. Until recently Gordon L. Ginn, Ph. D. was printed there, and he remains as Founder and Editor. However, it was decided that too many

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erection of menorahs on public property--most notably one in San Francisco's Union Square which was erected in 1975--to offer evidence of the Zionist Occupation Government in action. See "Down With the Cross..Up With the Menorah," *Criminal Politics* 1 (January 1992), pp. 8-9.

<sup>252</sup> Earl F. Jones, "Public Law 102-14," *Christian Crusade for Truth Intelligence Newsletter* (July-August 1991), p.4.

<sup>253</sup> Earl F. Jones, "Public Law 102-14," p. 3.

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

people either believe or disbelieve information based upon who the writer/editor is, and what academic degree is behind his name. We disagree with that kind of thinking." 255

No less than Pastor Jones, *Smyrna* sees the Joint Resolution in starkly millenarian terms:

...History is grinding to an end. The signs are everywhere.

Possibly one of the most prominent signs of the times that tells us the "last days" are upon us is the passage of House Joint Resolution 104 on March 20, 1991, which became Public Law 102-14. 256

*Smyrna* in turn credits the *Wall Street Journal* article for its information on the general content of the Noahides. What *Smyrna* does not say, but what becomes obvious from the sources offered by its exposition, is that alone among Identity theorists, *Smyrna* has taken the trouble to obtain material directly from the Noahide movement itself. Only this would explain its access to the *Gap*, the organ of the movement published by J. David Davis in Athens, Tennessee, and to the newspaper articles taken from a variety of often obscure Jewish sources which are gathered together in *The Root and Branch Noahide Guide*. Thus, for the precise threat which the Noahides present to Christian civilization--and for the death penalty hanging over the head of every Christian in this view--full credit is given to an article in the *Gap*, written by R. Michael Katz. R. Katz is quoted:

All would agree however, that only the seven [which] are derived from the Torah (either in the commandments to Adam or those to Noah) are capital sins, the transgression of which is punishable by execution. Jews are bound to enforce the Noahide Code to the extent that it is possible given their own circumstances of exile. 257

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255 "Lost Discernment," *Smyrna* (September/October 1991), pp. 3-4.

256 "Blessing or Curse," *Smyrna* (July/August 1991), p. 1.

257 Ibid., p. 2. Pastor Davis states that the penalty has always been theoretical, and save for murder, remains so today. Interview with J. David Davis, 12 March 1992.

So seriously does *Smyrna* take the threat of the Noahide Laws, that the entire issue of September/October is devoted to a consideration of the problem. Putting the Noahide controversy in the context of the recent gulf war and predictions by none other than the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Menachem Schneerson of imminent messianic redemption,<sup>258</sup> *Smyrna* reiterates its warning that the End is near, adding a number of supporting source documents. The diverse listing of sources include various, unnamed journals from the mainstream Churches (dubbed contemptuously "Jewish Christian" periodicals), sources from the *Noahide Guide* (uncredited), the *Encyclopedia Judaica* and the *Jewish Encyclopedia*.<sup>259</sup>

Between the *Smyrna* alarm and Pastor Jones' hermeneutics, the interpretation of the Noahide controversy which would hold sway throughout the White supremacist constellation crystalized. Indeed, Jack Mohr, a major Identity figure from Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, appropriated not only the issue, but the distinctive wording of Earl Jones' formulation:

You can be assured, that the Jewish '*sayanim*' (volunteers for Zionism) who infest the halls of Congress, did the job for them [Representatives Richard Gebhardt and Robert Michel, the bill's sponsors]. These '*sayanim*' received their orders from the real NAZIS (Zionist Princes) and our Congress, as usual with their heads in the sand, swallowed the Zionist bait, 'Hook, line and sinker. 260

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<sup>258</sup> "Schneerson: 'Have no fear, Gulf crisis heralds Messiah,'" *Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 1 September 1990, p. 6, notes the Rabbi Schneerson's views to this effect. Cf. "Waiting for Messiah," *Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 9 March 1991, p. 13; "Footsteps of Messiah?" *Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 4 May 1991, p.4; "Announcing the Days of Redemption," *Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 5 October 1991, p. 13. The Habad position is set out in a full page ad titled "The Time for Your Redemption has Arrived," *Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 29 June 1991, p. 5.

<sup>259</sup> "Blessing or Curse," *Smyrna* (July/August 1991), pp. 1-4.

<sup>260</sup> Jack Mohr, "The Seven Noahide Laws and Their Implications for Christians," *The Christian Patriot Crusader* 7 (December 1991), p. 3. Mohr borrows not only this



All that would remain was for the various sectors of the white Supremacist constellation to pick up on the issue and consider what, if anything, should be done in response. *Smyrna* for its part, submits that history teaches that change can come via one of only two methods, the ballot or violence, and opts for the former, offering readers a form letter to send to their congressman or senator.<sup>261</sup> Pastor Jones suggests no course of action, seeing the adoption of the Noahides as but another piece in the vast conspiratorial jigsaw puzzle which he has dedicated his life to unravelling.<sup>262</sup> In Sacramento, California, the National Justice Foundation, featuring the same Gordon Ginn, Ph. D. as its Religion Editor, published an article which like the Earl Jones contribution, adds further analysis, apparently without suggesting any definite course of action.<sup>263</sup> Most notable among the NJF hermeneutics is the suggestion that the first Noahide commandment proscribing idolatry could easily be interpreted as outlawing the "possession of artifacts

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phraseology without attribution, but centers his presentation on contrasting the replacement of creche scenes with menorahs.

261 "Blessing or Curse," *Smyrna* (July/August 1991), pp. 2-3.

262 Earl F. Jones, "Public Law 102-14," *Christian Crusade for Truth Intelligence Newsletter* (July-August 1991).

263 It is not possible to provide much more in the way of documentation for this source save that a portion of the article covers pp. 18-21 of an issue of the Foundation's journal. It is included here to further illuminate the 'jungle telegraph' by which ideas are disseminated. The journal, published by the National Justice Foundation, found its way into the hands of one Grant "Wings" Barker, an elderly right wing gadfly loosely associated with the Identity movement from his Gospel of the Kingdom Mission at Wilderness Ranch in El Cajon, California. Pastor Barker in turn has photocopied and re-mailed not only this journal excerpt, but has recycled *Smyrna* and seemingly anything else at hand. Pastor Barker's specialty however, is divining esoteric meaning from scripture in an effort to "count the End," which he confidently asserts will be: "About the fall Equinox of 1997; Bible years start in the fall [sic]." Grant "Wings" Barker, "Jesus Christ Returns in 1998 to Rule and Reign Over His Kingdom On Earth." Letter to Ted Kell, Sunset School of Preaching Extension, Church of Christ, La Mesa, California, 19 December 1981. The relevant document is from a mimeographed paper appended to the 8 page Kell letter.

such as a cross, a semblance of the baby Jesus, a statue of the Virgin Mary, Buddha and others for this would violate the prohibition of idol worship."<sup>264</sup>

Pastor Fred Butler of *The Shepherd's Voice* in Elizabethtown, Kentucky was noted in the previous chapter for his visit to Israel and for his praise for the kibbutzniks he met there. Responding to reader requests, Pastor Butler reprints the Education Day Resolution, fully crediting the moderate newspaper published by Don Bell in Florida for the text of Public Law 102-12, the extreme racist newsletter of James Warner's Christian Defense League in Louisiana for the background of the Lubavitcher movement, and of course *Smyrna* for 'primary source' documentation including relevant quotes from the *Wall Street Journal* article and from the Noahide newsletter, *The Gap*.<sup>265</sup> Pastor Butler's interpretation of all this is apocalyptic:

America, tribulation is promised, and tribulation we will get unless there is a national repentance! Our country is more evil than Sodom and Gomorrah. Can we expect to sleep with the devil and not pay the price?<sup>266</sup>

If pastor Butler hears the hoof beats of the Four Horsemen in the echoes of the Noahide movement, his response is conventional enough: he reprints a one paragraph form letter provided by a "corresponding Pastor," and suggests that it be sent to the reader's congressman or senator.<sup>267</sup>

Pastor John Harrell of the Christian Patriots Defense League (CDPL) of Flora, Illinois believes that the greatest danger of the Noahides is that their origin is from the

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<sup>264</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>265</sup> "Seven Noahide Laws," *The Shepherd's Voice* (March and April 1992), pp. 5-9.

<sup>266</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>267</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

Talmud, not the Bible. More, it appears to him that the implications of the laws are that they could result in the killing of Christians. He doesn't know if the Congress, and ultimately the President were simply ignorant, or that darker forces were at work, although in fact, he fully subscribes to the notion that the U.S. government is a Zionist entity, making the accidental passage of the Noahides most unlikely. However, while the Noahide controversy indicates that we are living in "dangerous times," he is not convinced that the event is a clear sign of the End.<sup>268</sup>

Dr. H. Graber of the Church of Christ In Israel in Mariposa, California, in his *Kingdom Courier* newsletter reproduces the Noahide laws and offers a brief analysis of each which does not differ significantly from any of the views considered above. Pastor Graber, following some stridently apocalyptic rhetoric, ends by meekly suggesting that a strong letter to the reader's local congressman is in order.<sup>269</sup>

The White Angel Isaac Sons of Lincoln, North Carolina are a group located at the most radical fringes of the Identity movement. They take up the Noahide debate by republishing an article by Paul Hall of the Identity Christian *Jubilee* newspaper from Midpines, California.<sup>270</sup> The Hall article is a carefully footnoted recitation of the case against the adoption of the Noahide laws, which breaks with the quietist majority of the movement, albeit obliquely, over what response would be appropriate:

Others having reported on the Noahide Law/Education Day nightmare have suggested writing to your congressman and complaining. While this is certainly a time honored method of attack

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<sup>268</sup> Interview with John Harrell, 13 March 1992.

<sup>269</sup> H. Graber, "Judaism, The Legislated Religion of the United States of America" *Kingdom Courier* 11 (November 1991), pp. 1-4.

<sup>270</sup> The Hall article, like the rest of this White Angel Isaac Sons mailing, is untitled and undated. This is typical of all White Angel Isaac Sons communications. It was originally published as Paul Hall, "Noahide Laws--Religion of a NEW WORLD ORDER," *Jubilee* 3 (November/December 1991), p. 1.

with varying levels of success, it is not what THE JUBILEE can honestly suggest. The devils are not going to cast themselves out.

Don't take it personally! Remember, the evil that has befallen our land is simply Yahweh's punishment for our national sins...

...Fortify your families, fellow remnant, and watch as the Babylonian ship of state sinks.<sup>271</sup>

Paul Hall through *Jubilee* may have been something of a late comer to the Noahide debate, but at this writing, he has come to take the lead in warning of the dimensions of the threat posed by the adoption of the Education Day resolution. Opening a new series on the Noahide Laws, pastor Hall notes that a second Education Day resolution has been offered in the Congress to honor the 90th birthday of R. Schneerson.<sup>272</sup> Not one to be caught off guard twice, pastor Hall notes that in the interim, he had obtained the book *The Path of the Righteous Gentile* by Chaim Clorfene and Yakov Rogalski,<sup>273</sup> and in addition, had conducted a telephone interview with a spokesman for Habad House in Crown Heights, New York. Pastor Hall's presentation closely follows *The Path of the Righteous Gentile*, emphasizing the death penalty for transgression of the Noahide Code, demonstrating again the Talmud's alleged anti-Christian and pornographic nature, and concluding with an examination of the Christianity as idolatry issue.<sup>274</sup>

*The Omega Times*, a derivative Identity newsletter published by the Solid Rock Bible Church of Smithville, Oklahoma credits several of their readers for an article on the Noahide movement which appeared in *The Tampa Tribune*.<sup>275</sup> Under the mistaken

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<sup>271</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>272</sup> As HJ 410, "Education Day USA." Paul Hall, "Noahide Laws II," *Jubilee* 4 (March/April 1992), p. 1. Pastor Hall devotes two columns to reprinting the names and districts of the resolution's sponsors under the title "Who Are the Sellouts?" (p. 17).

<sup>273</sup> Chaim Clorfene and Yakov Rogalski, *The Path of the Righteous Gentile* (Jerusalem: Targum Press, 1987).

<sup>274</sup> Paul Hall, "Noahide Laws II," pp. 11-12, 17.

<sup>275</sup> No date is given for the *Tribune* article in question. *The Omega Times* (July\*August\*September\*November 1991), p. 4. *The Omega Times* is notably playful



of *Criminal Politics*.<sup>279</sup> *Criminal Politics* appears to have the ambition of becoming the *Time Magazine* of the far right, a weekly replete with glossy cover, an all-star staff of contributing editors including such notables as the influential conspiracy theorist Eustace Mullins and the South African journalist Ivor Benson, and featuring most prominently an investment and portfolio service to its readers. All for the price of \$187.50 per year!<sup>280</sup> *Criminal Politics* prints the basic facts of the controversy, throws in helpful photographs of the Lubavitcher Rebbe and a Torah scroll, and artfully suggests a massive conspiracy which has deluded many Christians (not the least of whom was J. David Davis), and holds the World Zionist Organization (WZO) as at the root of this latest manifestation of the timeless conspiracy. It suggests no course of action however.<sup>281</sup>

### Afterword

This chapter centered on two very different sets of millenarian/messianic believers: the B'nai Noah and Identity Christians. As opposite as these two belief systems may be, the two movements are linked by their quest for a share in the covenantal relationship binding the Jewish people to God on the one hand, and by their perceptions that the End of Days are imminent on the other. Further, within Identity Christianity, recent conflicting appeals to recognize a particular event as a sign of the End were considered. Only one, the Noahide Laws, was widely accepted by the adherents of Christian Identity. This chapter has sought to explain this acceptance of a millennialist interpretation of the Noahide controversy in terms of textuality and historical resonance.

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<sup>279</sup> "Bush Merges Church and State--With 'Noahide Law'...(PL 102-12)!!" *Criminal Politics* 1 (January 1992), pp. 5-8.

<sup>280</sup> This is an astronomical sum in this milieu. *Criminal Politics* publisher Lawrence Patterson advertises his services as a financial consultant to readers for \$850 per hour, although his staff can provide the same services at the bargain rate of only \$300 per hour.

<sup>281</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE RECONSTRUCTED TRADITIONS: THE REAWAKENING OF THE ÁSATRÚ AND ODINIST COMMUNITIES<sup>1</sup>

*Cattle die, kinsmen die,  
oneself dies the same;  
but words of praise never die  
for those of great renown. [Hávámál 76]*

*Brothers will fight  
and kill each other,  
siblings  
do incest;  
men will know misery,  
adulteries be multiplied,  
an axe-age, a sword-age,  
shields will be cloven,  
a wind-age, a wolf-age,  
before the world's ruin.*

[Odin's description of Ragnarök, Prose Edda, 12th c.]<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Many of the names given below are, obviously, pseudonyms or magical names, adopted by the adherent for reasons of his or her own. Given names are used whenever possible, but if an adherent preferred that his or her real name not be used, this request was honored. In rare cases, some adherents requested that even their magical names be kept confidential as well, and this too was done in these instances. The bewildering array of names and confidences offered during the course of this research makes offering thanks to all who took part in this study nearly as problematic as the study itself. It is therefore hoped that this brief acknowledgement of gratitude for the great patience and assistance offered by the Ásatrú and Odinist communities throughout the course of this work will suffice for the moment. More precise acknowledgements may be found in the footnotes to this chapter.

<sup>2</sup> Snorri Sturluson, *The Prose Edda*, Jean I Young, trans., (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1966), p. 86. The marked similarity of this description of Ragnarök, the Twilight of the gods, to Jewish and Christian apocalyptic texts argues for considerable Christian influence on Sturluson's redaction, but of greater import to the interests of this chapter, graphically demonstrates the compatibility of the reconstruction of the Norse tradition with the monotheistic apocalypticists who people this dissertation. With Ragnarök, most of the gods, and much of the magic, disappeared from the earth, leaving the Odinist/Ásatrú literature to refer to the contemporary world--our world--as the Wolf-Age, based on this and similar texts.

## Introduction

The choice of Ásatrú/Odinism from the ranks of the numerous pre-Christian traditions currently being reconstructed,<sup>3</sup> albeit often in wildly fanciful forms, is based on three factors: location, viability and compatibility. Location<sup>4</sup> here is important in that, as in the cases of the oppositional monotheistic, millenarian and messianic communities which people this dissertation, the Ásatrú and Odinist communities inhabit the most distant reaches of acceptability within the Wiccan/neo-pagan world,<sup>5</sup> forming in fact a defined border region through which ideas and individuals may pass from the millenarian community into the magical/occult world and back again. Viability is here defined in terms of the opportunity which this group of adherents have before them to re-establish their tradition as a once again living religion<sup>6</sup> which will enjoy the natural growth and

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<sup>3</sup> For a good picture of the Wiccan and neo-pagan communities, see Margot Adler, *Drawing Down the Moon*, Second Edition (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986).

<sup>4</sup> The religious mapping concept is explicated in Martin E. Marty, *A Nation Of Behavers* (Chicago: The University Of Chicago Press, 1976).

<sup>5</sup> Margot Adler, *Drawing Down the Moon*, pp. 273-282. Cf. J. Gordon Melton, *The Encyclopedia of American Religions*, Supplement to Second Edition, (Detroit, MI: Gale Research, 1987), p. 641. Melton states:

Within the larger Pagan community, the Norse groups have, as a whole, been condemned for their overt racism. The Ásatrú Free Assembly has been largely free of racist expressions and has continued to be accepted by non-Norse Pagans.

The Ásatrú Free Assembly, headed by Stephen McNallen, was the first Ásatrú organization in America.

<sup>6</sup> Success has been defined by Rodney Stark as the "Degree to which a religious movement is able to dominate one or more societies." Rodney Stark, "How New Religions Succeed: A Theoretical Model," in David G. Bromley and Phillip E. Hammond, eds., *The Future of New Religious Movements* (Macon, GA: Mercer Press, 1987), p. 12. This standard would seem unduly harsh, and with J. Gordon Melton, this dissertation would define success simply as institutionalizing the tradition on a solid foundation which will survive the passing of the original founder(s). See J. Gordon Melton, "Introduction: When Prophets Die: The Succession Crisis in New Religions," in Timothy Miller, ed., *When*



development which can only come to a New Religious Movement through the passing of the religion from a community of first generation converts to a generation born into the belief system. The key to this viability is found in the unusual concentration of genuine scholarship with which Ásatrú has been blessed, and which is so sorely missed in the various traditions which are now being reconstructed through purely intuitive rather than a combination of intuitive and learned methods. Compatibility is implied by location, but the concept goes much further. Odinism, in its most extreme racist form, is quite compatible with the many of the sectors of the right wing constellation, as the attraction of certain skinhead groups, the late Robert Miles and his Dualist tradition, and the late Robert Mathews and other members of the revolutionary Order demonstrated. The strongly millenarian and chiliastic overtones of the apocalyptic 'twilight of the gods', Ragnarök and its aftermath provides a bridge to the potential racist adherent connecting those from fundamentalist and evangelical Christian backgrounds to Odinism.<sup>7</sup> At the other end of the

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*Prophets Die: The Postcharismatic Fate of New Religious Movements* (Albany, NY: SUNY, 1991), pp. 1-12. Cf. My review of the latter volume in *Communal Societies* 12 (1992), pp. 131-132.

<sup>7</sup> A good example may be found in a letter written to the leader of an Odinist organization from a skinhead incarcerated in California for hate crimes who became in prison a convert to Odinism [orthography as in original]:

Is Ragnarök an ongoing process, such as some Odinists believe, or is it going to be one giant upheaval as stated in the Völuspá? I have noticed that there are a few similarities between Ragnarök and Armageddon.

I also notice that Jesus was hung upon a tree and marked with a spear just as ODIN was. Also, in olden times THOR, FREY and ODIN were worshipped as a trinity just as the FATHER, SON and HOLY GHOST are now; THOR being the GOD of the common man, was given priority--just as JESUS is today.

Letter dated 11 January 1992. Names of correspondents withheld by request. Further consideration is given to the parallel between the 'passion' of Jesus and Odin below. For an interesting interpretation of Ragnarök from a scholarly perspective, see J. Oosten, "The War of the Gods in Scandinavian Mythology," in Hans G. Kippenberg, ed., *Struggles of the Gods: Papers of the Groningen Work Group for the Study of the History of Religions* (Berlin: Moulton Publishers, 1984), pp. 214-221.

spectrum, that of the Ásatrúer, compatibility here indicates strong linkages binding the adherent with the occult community on the one hand,<sup>8</sup> and with the dominant culture of which the Ásatrúer is a productive member on the other.

### I. Definitional Problems and the History of Odinism and Ásatrú

The Norse/Germanic tradition which is the focus of this chapter is more easily defined than differentiated. Indeed, the modern reconstruction of the Norse/Germanic pre-Christian religious tradition is so infused with overlapping tripartite 'divisions' that it would be of value to briefly note the work of Georges Dumézil, and to emphasize the impact of Dumézilian theory on the Ásatrú and to a lesser extent, Odinist communities. Dumézil, in his influential book *Gods of the Ancient Northmen*, posits a tripartite division of the Norse-Germanic pantheon which, he argues, serves to validate his primary theories of a common Indo-European ideology--in effect, an *ur* religion from which modern Western religious systems descend.<sup>9</sup> The central tripartite division differentiates fundamental cosmic principles: "(1) the Maintenance of cosmic and juridical order, (2) the exercise of physical prowess, and (3) the promotion of physical well-being."<sup>10</sup> These functions, applied to the Norse/Germanic pantheon, in effect, divided the roles of such

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<sup>8</sup> This isolation from the pagan community is lamented by William Bainbridge, "Some Thoughts on a Good time," *Vor Trú* 35 (Yule 2239/1989), pp.22-23. While he concedes that Ásatrúers are different from other pagans, Bainbridge insists on the necessity of Ásatrú becoming part of this wider community if the religion is to establish itself as a permanent feature of the American religious landscape. While it is true that Ásatrúers evince little interest in the doings of heathenry outside of the Norse/Germanic tradition, this isolation Bainbridge argues is inherently dangerous. The proof of this assertion is the failure of Ásatrú to attract significant numbers of women beyond wives or girlfriends of those active in the movement.

<sup>9</sup> Georges Dumézil, *Gods of the Ancient Northmen*, edited by Einar Haugen, (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1973).

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xi.

priestly, governing and justice dispensing deities as Odin<sup>11</sup> and Tyr from the warrior/guardian role of Thor, and these were again separated from the agricultural and herding deities Freyr or Freya. Dumézil applies this theory with great ingenuity at successively more narrowly defined levels of the tradition, although the results of the exercise do not appear to be as satisfying as those which result from the application of the same tripartite theory to Vedic religions. The overlap between the various functions of the Norse/Germanic pantheon is simply too great for so precise a classification.<sup>12</sup> It is

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<sup>11</sup> A principle analytic difficulty which plagues the non-specialist in the pre-Christian Germanic, Norse and Anglo Saxon traditions is the bewildering variety of names and spellings by which each god/dess is addressed. While it is tempting to follow the example of Wilfred von Dauster, editor of the outstanding Ásatrú journal *Mountain Thunder* and simply allow for the inclusion of any spelling, leaving the choice to the submitting authors, this dissertation unfortunately lacks so plausible of an explanation for inaction [*Mountain Thunder* 3 (1991), p. 15]. Therefore, the author has elected the path of least resistance, following the popular convention of utilizing familiar, Anglicized versions of Old Norse names in the text; while leaving direct quotations in the original. Thus, for example, at the apex of the pantheon is Odin, who may in other contexts be referred to as Wodan, Odhinn, Wotan or Woden, and to make sure that confusion reigns supreme, may be referred to as well by numerous epithets or names utilized when calling on certain of his various aspects. This was especially problematic with Odin, whose many aspects and dangerous qualities preclude all but the bravest (or most foolhardy) devotee from seeking to deal with the god in his full complexity. A representative listing of these aspectual names may be found in the Prose Edda which, with the older poetic Edda, form the Icelandic texts containing the fullest account of the Germanic/Norse myth cycle. See Snorri Sturluson, *The Prose Edda*, Jean I Young, trans., p. 31, 49. Cf. E.O.G. Turville-Petre, *Myth and Religion of the North* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1964), pp. 61-63, for an analysis of Odin's aspectual names.

In this maze of synonyms and aspectual names, I am grateful to the works of KveldúlfR Gundarsson and of Gamlinginn for providing texts which somewhat illuminate these intricate by-ways. Particularly of help in this are KveldúlfR Gundarsson, *Teutonic Religion* (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn, forthcoming), and Gamlinginn, *The Ordasafn of Gamlinginn* (Albuquerque, NM: Hrafnahús, 1991).

<sup>12</sup> KveldúlfR Gundarsson, *Teutonic Religion*, ch. 3, provides a concise argument for the difficulty of fitting Dumézil's theory to the Norse/Germanic pantheon. A Ph. D. thesis currently in the process of completion at Cambridge University in England makes this same point, albeit at far greater depth, in discussing the intricacies of the Odinnic cult. Stephen Grundy, "The Cult of Odinn, God of Death." For a counter argument by a true believer in the Dumézilian theory, see Edred Thorsson, *Northern Magic* (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 1992), pp. 27-29. *Northern Magic* is a popular market account by Edred Thorsson, a Ph.D. scholar in Germanic studies (under his birth name of Stephen Flowers) of whom much more will be heard later. Thorsson is a primary intellectual force behind the Ásatrú revival in the United States.

however, a remarkable aspect of the Ásatrú revival that so esoteric a debate would be conducted with such passion among a decidedly non-academic community of adherents.<sup>13</sup>

This inconvenient overlap which bedevils the application of the Dumézilian theory to the Norse/Germanic tradition makes the separation of Ásatrú and Odinism correspondingly difficult. All worship the same pantheon, and the small Ásatrú and Odinist communities tend to interact to varying degrees in social and ritual contexts.<sup>14</sup> Indeed, it is only in recent years that a definitive separation can be documented between Odinism and Ásatrú.<sup>15</sup>

The primary sociological factor which best serves to separate the closely linked Ásatrú and Odinist communities--the emphasis on racial mysticism and, in its most extreme manifestation, pronounced neo-Nazi sympathies--itself offers no easily demarcated borders. Yet the groups, despite their marked affinities, are not the same, and differentiation is important. What follows then, is an admittedly imperfect attempt to differentiate these groups in both theological and sociological terms, and these rough working 'definitions' will inform the balance of this chapter. The analysis assumes with the advantage of hindsight that the inherent tensions between Odinists and Ásatrúers as defined below were present in the movement from its inception, and it is therefore possible

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<sup>13</sup> Arguing for Dumézil's view is Stephen A. McNallen, "Magic, Asafolk and Spiritual Development," *Mountain Thunder* 4 (1992), pp. 5-6. Arguing the counter-case is KveldúlfR Hagan Gundarsson, "Wisdom, Might and Fruitfulness: Dumézil's Theory in the Germanic Rebirth," *Mountain Thunder* 6 (1992), pp. 5-9.

<sup>14</sup> The value and venue for such interactions as the community becomes increasingly divided is emphasized by the father of the Theodist tradition, Garman Lord of Watertown, New York, in his hymn to the value of the traditional sumbel, a religious drinking ceremony which features mutual toasts and boasts. Garman Lord, "The Need for Sumbel," *Mountain Thunder* 6 (1992), pp. 20-22.

<sup>15</sup> The earliest organizations dedicated to the reconstruction of the Norse/Germanic tradition all took the name Odinist, while the first (and to date, only) academic article on the subject, written by Stephen Flowers at a time when his alter ego Edred Thorsson was still a separate entity, stated that the terms Odinist and Ásatrú were used interchangeably. Stephen E. Flowers, "Revival of Germanic Religion in Contemporary Anglo-American Culture," *Mankind Quarterly* 21:3 (Spring 1981), p. 279, n. 2.

to consider the movements, or perhaps the opposing factions of a single movement, in isolation. Such an exercise however, would be impossible without an examination of the historical development of each of the contending belief structures.

### Odinism

Odinism as it is presently understood appeared first. Although its precise origins are far from clear, its inspiration may have centered in the profound social and political crises which engulfed Germany in the chaotic period of the Weimar Republic.<sup>16</sup> In this time of intermingled chaos and decadence, wandering groups of displaced or simply disillusioned German youth, known collectively as the German Youth Movement began, perhaps as a lark, perhaps with more serious intent, to make sacrifices to Wotan. Many of these young people would in the Nazi era give up their wanderings for the greater excitement of helping to build the Third Reich with Adolf Hitler's assent to power.<sup>17</sup> Nor would the old gods be entirely absent from the chiliastic dreams of the architects of the Third Reich. While difficult to determine with absolute certainty, a fascinating, if eccentric,

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<sup>16</sup> This analysis purposely ignores the important contributions of the Romantic revival in Germany in the 18th and 19th centuries. This is in concurrence with the argument of Stephen Flowers/Edred Thorsson that the modern revival of the Norse/Germanic tradition is in accord with the contemporary "movement in search of alternate personal, cultural and religious models during a time when established models are perceived as either deficient or as discredited." Going farther, Flowers implies as well that the excesses of this revivalist fervor were liable to misuse by adherents of National Socialist ideologies and by the negative activities of 'traditional Satanists (who are differentiated from the positive Satanism of Anton Szandor LaVey's Church of Satan). Ibid., p. 280 and n. 8-9. For interesting discussions of the Romantic era from the perspective of the contemporary revival however, see Edred Thorsson, *Northern Magic*, pp. 181-194; or Edred Thorsson, *A Book of Troth* (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 1992), pp. 22-28.

<sup>17</sup> C. G. Jung, "Wotan," in C. G. Jung, *The Collected Works*, V. 10, Bollingen Series XX, (New York: Pantheon, 1964), p. 180. "Wotan" first appeared in *Neue Schweizer Rundschau* (Zurich), n.s., III (March 1936), 657-669.

literature has grown up around the mystical endeavors of leading figures in the Nazi party, of which the revival of pre-Christian religious forms was but one manifestation.<sup>18</sup>

It is important to note at this point that the connection of Naziism, the occult, and the Germanic pantheon retains some potency in the current reconstruction of the tradition. It will be recalled that Stephen Flowers rejected the German romantic revival as an appropriate model for the revival of Odinism/Ásatrú on the basis that it was a road leading the unwary toward the dangers of National Socialism and negative Satanism. Yet he would as Stephen Edred Flowers, Grand Master of the Order of the Trapezoid in the Temple of Set embrace elements of the revival of German romanticism.<sup>19</sup> The Temple of Set, a satanist mail-order church headed by Dr. Michael Aquino, reconstituted the Order of the Trapezoid from its origins in 1970 in the Church of Satan headed by Anton LaVey,<sup>20</sup> and it serves today as the primary vehicle for the Temple of Set's collective exploration of the darker side of German culture, and for Stephen Flowers' personal shamanic odyssey into the dark side of Odin.<sup>21</sup> While affirming that the Order of the Trapezoid seeks to extract the positive and constructive elements from the German romantic revival, and to avoid the excesses and cruelties associated with the Nazi era, nonetheless:

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<sup>18</sup> See for example, Dusty Sklar, *Gods and Beasts: The Nazis and the Occult* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1977), and Trevor Ravenscroft, *The Spear of Destiny* (York Beach, MN: Samuel Weiser, 1982).

<sup>19</sup> Stephen Edred Flowers, Grand Master, "Order of the Trapezoid," as of January 18, XXII (1987), pp. 1-3.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., pp. 3-5.

<sup>21</sup> One is struck that an intellect of Flowers' stature would find an essentially dualistic worldview characteristic of Christian monotheism compatible with the magical worldview characteristic of Ásatrú heathenry. The only explanation which would appear to suffice for these seemingly mutually exclusive pursuits would appear to lie in Flowers/Thorsson's self-styled shamanic quest--in this case in search of the secrets of the darker aspects of Odin. The shaman's path is a lonely one, and as will become apparent in the examination of the organizational history of Ásatrú, one which will offer the seeker few enough plaudits for his dangerous journeyings.

The Germanic tradition is also part of the legacy of the Prince of Darkness, hence it is appropriate to an Order within the Temple of Set, which embraces all manifestations of the Powers of Darkness in the world.<sup>22</sup>

Dr. Aquino notes his own long standing interest in Nazi occultism in a letter to Temple of Set adherents (Setians) in which he briefly reviews his own previous writings on the subject and details a trip he made to Heinrich Himmler's castle in Westphalia to determine whether it was in fact modified to accommodate the practice of Black Magic. He determined that it was not.<sup>23</sup> Not shared with the Setians in this letter however, was the fact that Dr. Aquino not only believed that the castle was used for occult purposes, but that in the Walhalla or Hall of the Dead, Dr. Aquino actually conducted "a working" on the very spot where he believed that Himmler's own occult exploration took place for the express purpose of reconstituting the Church of Satan's Order of the Trapezoid for the Temple of Set.<sup>24</sup>

This Nazi-occult connection has not escaped the notice of less learned Odinists. A letter from the same California skinhead quoted above states:

Have you ever read "Die Stimme Der Ahnen" by Heinrich Himmler? It is a great little booklet and I think it adequately describes [the necessity] for all white people to return to the ancient values and traditions. Our people are lost and living in alien traditions.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 3. This remarkable assertion is followed by warnings calling for "ethical sensitivity and social discretion."

<sup>23</sup> Untitled letter from Michael Aquino, 8 November, XVII (1982).

<sup>24</sup> Stephen Edred Flowers, Grand Master, "Order of the Trapezoid," pp. 4-5.

<sup>25</sup> Letter dated 2 September 1991. Names of correspondents withheld by request.

At the same time that Hitler was in the process of consolidating his early power in Germany, the occult aspects of the Third Reich were gaining the attention of mystics outside of Germany. One such, an eccentric Australian named Alexander Rud Mills, was an unabashed Nazi sympathizer and, of greater import, a believer in a form of racial mysticism which posited the pre-Christian Anglo-Saxon society as the Golden Age of the British people. Mills in the 1930s began to turn his dreams towards the reconstruction of that perfect time in this degenerate age. Following a path that would be well trod by such modern groups as Ben Klassen's Church of the Creator and the most extreme sectors of the Russian group Pamyat, Mills' diagnosis held that the contemporary malady of civilization was due to the malign influence of the Jews, and as Christianity was built on the foundation of the vile Middle Eastern Abrahamic cult, it too had to be severed from the soul of the descendants of the Anglo-Saxon race as quickly and surely as one would excise a cancer.<sup>26</sup> Out of this process of reasoning came Mills' first and most influential book: *The Odinist Religion: Overcoming Jewish Christianity*.<sup>27</sup> *The Odinist Religion* was the first of

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<sup>26</sup> On Pamyat, Interview with R. Dov Ber Haskelevich, 23 March 1992. On the COC, see the monthly newspaper, *Racial Loyalty*.

<sup>27</sup> A. Rud Mills, *The Odinist Religion: Overcoming Jewish Christianity* (Melbourne, Australia: self published, c. 1930). The early distribution of the volume is of some interest as it mirrors precisely the method by which contemporary millenarian and right wing political activists seek to bring their ideas to national leaders; by sending a free copy and a fawning letter. Such a letter is affixed to the copy of *The Odinist Religion* in my possession. Addressed to one Captain Ramsay, M.P., Mills writes in a letter from Melbourne dated 5 September 1939:

Dear Sir,

I have heard of your efforts to help forward the idea of an English England.

As a small token of my respect for your work I send you with my compliments, under separate cover, a copy of my book "The Odinist Religion Overcoming Jewish Christianity."

I remain Sir,

Yours faithfully,  
[signature]



a number of writings--mostly in tract form--which Mills would turn out for the next several decades, but it is the most revealing of the gradual process through which he was able to disengage his thought from the deeply ingrained paradigms of the dominant Christian culture and assume, step by step, an idealized pagan philosophy.<sup>28</sup> In this text however, the names Odin, Thor and on occasion Loki are invoked merely as a literary device to anthropomorphize facets of the Christian God in the name of race and nationalism. *The Odinist Religion* is in reality a manichaean treatise deeply wedded to a dualist world view which offers an imagined history in which Europe is the true birth place of civilization and from whence White men descended from a common ancestor (named either George or Sigge) who is posited as the culture bearer to the world<sup>29</sup> and whose progeny are held to have built the Egyptian pyramids and founded empires.<sup>30</sup> From this imagined history and theft of culture motif, Mills adds the prominent conspiracy scenarios of the day from Judaism to Freemasonry, dire warnings against usury (a Christian view point if there ever

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<sup>28</sup> For example, A. Rud Mills, *The Call of Our Ancient Nordic Religion* (Melbourne: self published, 1957).

<sup>29</sup> A. Rud Mills, *The Odinist Religion: Overcoming Jewish Christianity*, p. 31. The prevalence of a common White ancestor acting as culture bearer has been noted before in the context of the Christian Identity conception of the role of Adam, and is heavily influenced by pre-Adamic theory. See Richard H. Popkin, *Isaac La Peyr  re (1596-1676): His Life, Work and Influence* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1987).

<sup>30</sup> A. Rud Mills, *The Odinist Religion: Overcoming Jewish Christianity*, p. 31. Again, Christian Identity provides close parallels, but so do the most extreme claims of Afrocentric scholarship. Indeed, the 'Theft of Culture' motif is as old as time. That culture can be borrowed from but not stolen is too obvious to dwell upon, but interested parties are referred to the succinct treatment this claim receives from the Jewish perspective (whose 18th century *maskelim* 'enlighteners' were not loath to posit such theft of culture scenarios in response to the European Enlightenment) in Yaacov Shavit, 'The 'Glorious Century' or the 'Cursed Century': Fin-de-Si  cle Europe and the Emergence of Modern Jewish Nationalism,' *Journal of Contemporary History* 26 (1991), pp. 553-574. For a fascinating account of how one Afrocentric sect, the Black Islamic Hebrews, combines early Nation of Islam ideas with later Black Hebrew theories to develop a theft of culture scenario with Europeans as the culprits and Africans as the victims, see Imaam Isa Al Haadi Al Mahdi, *Sons of Canaan* (Brooklyn, NY: Ansaaru Allah Community, n.d.).

was one!) and miscegenation, and finally, as if to add to the cultural confusion, the claim that Christ did not die on the cross!<sup>31</sup>

Mills would win few converts to his Anglecyn (later Anglican!) Church of Odin, but his writings would be kept alive, more as a curiosity than anything else, in the world of the right wing publishing houses.<sup>32</sup> It was in this milieu that Mills would be discovered by Else Christensen and her late husband in the early 1960s during the course of reading such right wing staples as Yockey's *Imperium* and Spengler's *Decline of the West*.<sup>33</sup> But it was Mills who would inspire the Christiansons to form the nucleus of the organization which would, after the death of her husband, become in 1971 the Odinist Fellowship in Crystal River, Florida:

When confronted with Rud Mills' ideas and the political atmosphere of the time, I suppose that I finally realized that the problems were more of a spiritual nature than political. We chose the Scandinavian mythology as, at the time, the animosity between Anglo Saxons and Teutons (aftermath of WWII) was still lingering; Scandinavian was neutral; a rational choice, not because I'm Danish.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., pp. 66-67. Mills here seems not to be aware of the similar 'passion' of Odin who in effect suffered crucifixion in one myth cycle as a shamanic wisdom quest! In the poem *Hávamál* from the Poetic Edda, Odin is depicted as hanging for nine days on the world tree, Yggdrasil, and like Christ, his side was said to have been pierced by a spear. Yet Odin's quest was shamanic, not sacrificial, and the prize was knowledge of the runes. See H.R. Ellis Davidson, *Gods and Myths of Northern Europe* (Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1964), pp. 143-145. On the paradigm of Germanic shamanism reflected by this myth, see Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*, Willard R. Trask, trans., Bollingen Series LXXVI, (New York: Pantheon, 1964), p. 379-387.

<sup>32</sup> What remains in print can be purchased from James Warner's mail order catalogue in Metairie, Louisiana. Warner, a long time Christian Identity figure, is believed to have some Odinist sympathies (as did Ku Klux Klan Grand Dragon Robert Miles), although the persistent rumor in right wing circles that Warner had become an Odinist is unlikely to be true.

<sup>33</sup> Interview with Else Christensen, 27 November 1992.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

Mrs. Christensen is said to remain so enamored with Mills' work that she has obtained a complete collection of A. Rud Mills' writings and effects, and it seems clear from this research that a primary area of differentiation between Odinists and Ásatrúers is a knowledge of Mills.<sup>35</sup> From the inspiration which Mills provided to the Christiansons, and through the dissemination of Mills' thought in the pages of Else Christianson's publication, *The Odinist*,<sup>36</sup> flow other primary differentiating factors: far greater contact with the other sectors of the 'White Supremacist Constellation' (see Chapter 2) than the Ásatrú adherents would find palatable, a conspiratorial view of history, a pronounced warrior ethic which emphasizes the desire to one day strike back in some form at the dominant culture for its perceived injustices, a strongly racialist strain of thought which verges easily and often into racial mysticism, and perhaps most telling of all, a reductionist concentration on reviving an idealized form of the tribal ethical values of the Germanic and Norse (read Viking) peoples in place of the long and complex process of reconstructing these Golden Age religious, communal and magical practices in the context of the modern world which is in fact the ambitious task set before the Ásatrúer.<sup>37</sup>

The heady combination of National Socialism, the occult, the Viking mystique and the quest for community proved irresistible to other long standing elements of the "White supremacist constellation" as well. Of these, perhaps most revealing of the processes by

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<sup>35</sup> In the course of the interviews that form the heart of this research, virtually no self-identified Ásatrúer had read Mills, and few had even heard the name, while no Odinist had not heard of Mills, even if s/he had not actually read any of Mills' work.

<sup>36</sup> Ásatrúers were belatedly treated to a discussion of Mills in the Ásatrú Alliance organ, *Vor Trú* 45 (Summer 1992).

<sup>37</sup> These points will be dealt with in greater depth below, but suffice to say here that *The Odinist*, has over the years strongly reflected all of these points. Indeed, writings on the gods or exegesis on the Eddas and Sagas are few and far between, while commentaries on right wing texts, the news of the day, warrior ethics, and even at times essays that verge on, if not explicitly endorse, standard anti-Semitic themes are regular fare. See for example, "The Racial Mysticism of Alfred Rosenberg," *The Odinist* 51 (1980), p. 1; or "Philosophers and the Jewish Problem," *The Odinist* 58 (1981), p. 1.

which these racist adherents seek to exploit the Norse/Germanic revival are the activities of George Dietz. Dietz, a German immigrant and long time figure in American neo-Nazi circles whose primary income appears to be derived from the sale of anti-Semitic and racist literature through his Liberty Bell Publications,<sup>38</sup> took note of the revival of Odinist groups around the United States and, through one of his younger associates, Ron Hand, created the Odinist Study Group, ostensibly as a front operation for his own National Socialist movement. Hand, operating under the name Reinhold Dunkel in NS circles and in his own in Odinist affairs, enjoyed complete autonomy as leader of the group, although in the Byzantine world of American National Socialism, independence is a relative term. This period saw intensive conflicts with Ben Klassen, head of the Church of the Creator and neo-Nazi leader Matt Koehl of the National Socialist White People's Party.<sup>39</sup>

According to Dietz's version of the story, he moved to West Virginia, an area in which he felt that he would be relatively immune to attack from enemies (or rivals), and began to forge alliances with Matt Koehl, local members of the Birch Society, and others on the far right wing. The party in the wake of American Nazi Party leader (later National Socialist White Peoples' Party) George Lincoln Rockwell's death however, was in his view, "a lot of little fuehrers with no brains and lots of guts." Worse, by the late 1970s or early 1980s, he (Dietz) had come to realize that Germany was probably dead to a possible National Socialist revival, and the last hope for a Nazi resurgence was the United States. And perhaps Odinism might offer just such an opportunity.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, *Extremism on the Right: A Handbook* (New York: ADL, 1988), pp. 80-81.

<sup>39</sup> Conversation with Ron Hand, 12 September 1992.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

The extent of George Dietz's knowledge of the Odinist revival is in some doubt. He clearly knew of Else Christensen, but whether he knew much more is questionable.<sup>41</sup> The original plan, unformed as it was, appears to have been to gather a list of local Odinist groups and to infiltrate them, turning them gradually towards National Socialism. This plan could not be carried out as George Dietz had decided to sell his mailing list, of which the Odinist Study Group was a part, to other groups. This had the ironic effect of bringing the OSG to life.<sup>42</sup> That life consisted of in effect, a mail order kindred, in which the inclusion of the OSG's address in certain right wing lists--especially those of Joseph Dilys in Chicago, and by word of mouth--brought in a number of seekers from across the country, many of them in the prisons.<sup>43</sup> Now losing interest in Odinism, Hand directs letters to the OSG to Mike Murray of the Ásatrú Alliance.<sup>44</sup>

### Ásatrú

The organizational history of the Ásatrú movement is relatively straightforward, but the movement itself is as difficult to define as it is to trace the complex paths which led the members of the community to embrace Ásatrú. The term Ásatrú itself is an Icelandic word

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<sup>41</sup> A primary research difficulty is that Dietz's leadership style is such that he never explicitly gave an order. Rather, he employed hints and subtle manipulation to effect his will among his young subordinates. Failing this, the subordinate would be offered the chance to publish his views in one of Dietz's Liberty Bell Publications, and Dietz would simply change the text to faithfully reflect his own viewpoint. Ibid. Not surprisingly, Dietz is loath to comment on this, or any other aspect of this research.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ron Hand himself, a graduate of the Methodist Theological School in Delaware, Ohio, was once a United Methodist pastor in Newell, West Virginia, from 1975-1978, and was for several years an assistant prison chaplain in West Virginia as well. Letters from Ron Hand dated 9 September 1991 and 5 November 1991.

<sup>44</sup> Conversation with Ron Hand, 12 September 1992.

which means 'belief in the Æsir',<sup>45</sup> a fitting misnomer for a community which embraces belief in the Vanir and indeed in a host of lesser wights [beings]. For the Æsir are but one class of gods, those who correspond roughly to Dumézil's first two functions, rulership/judgement and defense/strength. These include such mighty figures as Odin and Thor, but they exist intertwined with the Vanir, a pantheon whose origins are far from clear, but who generally fit with Dumézil's third function, provision of the necessities and the delights of physical existence.<sup>46</sup> Included here are such deities of the air and water as Njord, Frey and Freja.<sup>47</sup> It may be of some significance for the current state of the Ásatrú/Odinist imbroglio that the Æsir and Vanir are believed to have begun as warring pantheons,<sup>48</sup> but were to become so closely identified that the term Æsir was considered sufficient to denote both groups.<sup>49</sup> While the contemporary adherents of Odinism and Ásatrú would appear to be travelling in the opposite direction--from brotherhood to battle--there does remain a faint hope that the process can be reversed in the greater interest of consolidating the religious community.

It is clear from this research that the ranks of Ásatrúers existed long before the appearance of an organized Ásatrú community. The testimonies are many, but taken together, these tend fall in several categories. Most common are what could be called the awakening of childhood memories. In the 1950s and 1960s, storybook adaptations of Norse mythology, often beautifully illustrated, were popular gifts for young boys. Several

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<sup>45</sup> Gamlinginn, *The Ordasafn of Gamlinginn*, p. 17; or Stephen E. Flowers, "Revival of Germanic Religion in Contemporary Anglo-American Culture," p. 279, n. 2.

<sup>46</sup> Edred Thorsson, *A Book of Troth*, p. 215.

<sup>47</sup> R. B. Anderson, *Norse Mythology; or The Religion of Our Forefathers* (Chicago, IL: Knight & Leonard, 1875), pp. 341-370.

<sup>48</sup> J. Oosten, "The War of the Gods in Scandinavian Mythology," pp. 203-214.

<sup>49</sup> E.O.G. Turville-Petre, *Myth and Religion of the North*, 156.

present day Ásatrúers report gaining an interest in the Northern Way from this source which has yet to abate. KveldúlfR Gundarsson can still recall the title of such a work was *Norse Gods and Giants* by Ingri and Edgar Parin d'Aulaire. He obtained it at the age of six for the then princely sum of \$6.95.<sup>50</sup> Edred Thorsson too recalls a childhood fascination with Germanic myth and folklore; an interest which soon faded, but was rekindled in the early 1970s following a stay in Germany and German language training.<sup>51</sup> James Chisholm, the former Steersman of the Ring of Troth, "developed a penchant for reading Greek mythology books" at the age of nine, and switched to Norse mythology at his father's suggestion.<sup>52</sup> Robert Stine, at the strong insistence of his mother was given the freedom to choose his own religious path, and would discover Norse mythology at a young age in the pages of an early 1960s edition of Collier's Encyclopedia.<sup>53</sup>

A second port of entry into Ásatrú flows from the influence of pop culture or the desire to become involved with the occult or magical community as a teenager or young adult. The prototype of such introductions is offered by the key figure in the institutionalization of Ásatrú in America, Stephen McNallen:

I made a personal conversion to Norse heathendom after reading the historical novel, *The Viking* by Edison Marshall, which contrasted the values of Ásatrú and Christianity. (This is the novel from which the film with Kirk Douglas ... was made in the late 1950's). More accurately, the novel sparked further research which soon led to my conversion. This study was my first significant exposure to Germanic mythology and religion.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Interview with KveldúlfR Gundarsson, January 1993.

<sup>51</sup> Interview with Edred Thorsson, 20 September 1992.

<sup>52</sup> Interview with James Chisholm, 17 November 1992.

<sup>53</sup> Interview with Robert Stine, 23-24 December 1992.

<sup>54</sup> Interview with Stephen McNallen, 4 January 1993. Cf. "What about the Vikings?" *The Runestone* 1 (Fall 1992), pp. 8-11. This edition of the *Runestone*, the first to be published by Steve McNallen and Maddy Hutter since the original eponymous journal folded in 1987, confirms the influence of the Edison novel and film, and argues that despite

William Bainbridge, currently a member of the governing council (High Rede) of the Ring of Troth, "first became interested in Ásatrú through two practically simultaneous influences: an individual who wrote a short introduction to Ásatrú in a local Pagan newsletter, and my beginning to study runes through the work of Edred Thorsson."<sup>55</sup> Taking the arrival at Ásatrú via the magical community to its logical extreme, the current Steerswoman of the Ring of Troth, Prudence Priest, came to the tradition after long involvement in other Wiccan and neo-pagan traditions.<sup>56</sup>

Much less talked about, but important nonetheless, are the instances of what might be called direct revelation; that is, direct contact with a particular god/dess. These events are deeply personal experiences, but are remarkable for the character of these meetings. For far from the biblical accounts of divine revelation in Judaism and Christianity, the Norse/Germanic gods appear to their chosen without any sense of command, or indeed, hierarchy. The atmosphere appears to closely resemble the frequent contacts which the gods had with humans in the Eddas and sagas, where divinity and humanity met as relative equals, and loyalty was based on reciprocity. The number of these direct contacts are small, and with a single exception, those so favored are loath to speak of the matter. Yet the event, when it occurs, is life changing. Specific instances of such direct contacts will be considered in greater detail elsewhere in this chapter.

Whatever the truth of these contacts, there can be no doubt that, for a significant number of people, none of whom could be aware of the others' existence, some influence reawakened a passionate interest in the Norse/Germanic religious tradition. This

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the recent trends toward scholarship and esoteric magical explorations among many current Ásatrúers, the Vikings remain in his view the primary Golden Age model for emulation for the Ásatrú community.

<sup>55</sup> Interview with William Bainbridge, 24 January 1993.

<sup>56</sup> Conversation with Prudence Priest, 22 November 1992.



awakening took place in widely disparate areas of the world in a relatively short time, and within months of each other, journals dedicated to the Northern Way began to appear.<sup>57</sup> The explanation for this sudden awakening is the subject of considerable debate in the Ásatrú community. Yet for all of these theories surrounding the rebirth of the tradition, it is important to stress that all hold as axiomatic that the old gods are, in one form or another, the actual engines powering this conversion.<sup>58</sup>

Who then are the adherents of Ásatrú (Ásatrúers)? It is impossible to posit with certainty the precise size of the American Ásatrú community. Based on interviews for this research however, and on estimates of the circulation of primary Ásatrú journals and organizations, 500 committed adherents would be a reasonable estimate, with peripheral 'members' perhaps swelling the number to a maximum of 1,000.<sup>59</sup> According to one well informed, independent Ásatrúer, the American Ásatrú community (excluding Odinists)<sup>60</sup> may be divided into four primary categories:

Members of the Ásatrú Alliance-about 20%  
Members of the Ring of Troth-about 20%  
Members of independent groups-about 20%

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<sup>57</sup> Stephen McNallen recalls of this time [c. 1972]:

Else [Christianson] began publishing within a few months of the time the first *Runestone* appeared, and *Raven Banner* made its debut in England, courtesy of the Odinic Committee. These happenings weren't quite simultaneous, but darned near so, and with utterly no contact among us until much later. I consider this to be a significant synchronistic event.

Interview with Stephen McNallen, 4 January 1993.

<sup>58</sup> The arguments heard in this regard in Ásatrú circles are not dissimilar to those heard in B'nai Noah circles (see ch. 3) to explain the sudden rebirth, in widely disparate lands, of the Godfearer ideal.

<sup>59</sup> These numbers are in general accord with the best estimate of DjúpkverkR and other observers of the movement. Conversation with DjúpkverkR, 3 April 1993.

<sup>60</sup> Odinists are simply too diffuse to attempt a meaningful analysis.

Unaffiliated individual adherents-about 30%<sup>61</sup>

A breakdown of the community beyond the observation that Ásatrú is overwhelmingly white, male, and comparatively young (most adherents interviewed for this research tend to cluster between 30-40 years of age) is impossible given the dispersion of the community. For some Ásatrúers interviewed in this research, the problem of the dearth of women in Ásatrú<sup>62</sup> has often necessitated contact with local Wiccan covens for the purpose of, put bluntly (but considerably less so than is usual in conversation with this group of Ásatrúers), finding women who are already in the magical community and would thus be more adaptable to the Northern Way.<sup>63</sup> On a more optimistic note, KveldúlfR Gundarsson

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<sup>61</sup> Interview with Djúpkerkr, 14 October 1992.

<sup>62</sup> As low as this percentage is, the situation on Britain appears even more dire, with the Odinnic Rite appearing to be 100% male at this time. Letter from KveldúlfR Gundarsson, 14 April 1993.

<sup>63</sup> The names of these Ásatrúers are withheld by demand. Other Ásatrúers note in more abstract terms that Ásatrú women are so few and far between that it is common to marry either a Wiccan, a woman willing to convert, or as a last resort, a tolerant agnostic. Interview with Robert Stine, 23-24 December 1992. Odinists face an even more serious problem in terms of attempting to create viable belief communities with a workable balance of the sexes. Odinism in fact is overwhelmingly male, with even Else Christensen, the only female Odinist leader of which this research is aware. Mrs. Christensen provides some valuable insight into the contradictions inherent in female involvement in what is at root a warrior religion:

Funny enough, I've more been 'one of the boys' than represented the female aspect. However, maybe that actually accentuate[s] the equality of male and female; but I've been told that I think like a man; it was meant as a compliment, I don't know if it is (my husband trained me well/cut the bull!), but it may be the reason that I somehow became the director of a warrior religion...

Maybe the male ego in some cases has been an obstacle; women (some) may be more willing to negotiate. As we are dealing with spiritual matters, I receive many letters from men (mostly prison inmates) who need some handle on their religious beliefs in tune with their inner convictions which nobody gave them before. "If I had known what you have explained to me now, I wouldn't be where I am today." I am aware that to some degree I am a mother or older sister figure.

Interview with Else Christensen, 27 November 1992.

notes that while there is a dearth of authentic Ásatrú women--and those who are in the community are often "Wiccan[s] with the serial number filed off and and replaced by a Nordic paint job," women are increasing in numbers in the Ring of Troth.<sup>64</sup>

The occupations pursued by Ásatrúers tend to reflect a mix of blue and white collar professions, including; accountant, business executives, military officers, farmer, dental assistant, lawyer, martial arts instructor, nurse, printer, weaver, secretary, Ph. D. candidate, university professor, architect, writer, and many more. Most tend to be well educated, with at least a BA degree, and many motivated by Ásatrú return to school to obtain language or other knowledge relevant to Ásatrú.<sup>65</sup>

### The Ásatrú Free Assembly

With so many adherents awakening to the rebirth of Ásatrú, it was only a matter of time before organizations would be formed to link these scattered believers into some form of community. Remarkably, no less than three independent groups sprang up in three countries at roughly the same time. Although this dissertation centers solely on the American groups, it is important to note that Ásatrúarmenn in Iceland was formed by Svienbjörn Beinteinsson in 1973,<sup>66</sup> and in the same year, the the Committee for the

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<sup>64</sup> Letter from KveldúlfR Gundarsson, 14 April 1993. Gundarsson notes that the attraction of wiccan women reflect deeper considerations than simple numbers and availability. They are, in keeping with the general philosophy of neo-pagandom, tolerant of Viking eccentricities: "I worship the goddess because I am a woman, being a Viking is a boy thing, and that's okay too."

<sup>65</sup> Interview with DjúpverkR, 14 October 1992. It might be added that Ásatrúers, like many neo-pagans, are voracious readers as well.

<sup>66</sup> Stephen E. Flowers, "Revival of Germanic Religion in Contemporary Anglo-American Culture," p. 282. Beinteinsson remains something of an icon for Odinists as well. *The Odinist* carries the remarkable story of one young American Odinist who made the journey to see Beinteinsson, only to find the language barrier impassable. The reader is reminded of religious seekers of an earlier day who would make pilgrimages to distant holy men only to discover that they were equipped linguistically and culturally to do little more than stare at the radiant countenance of the learned one, and to write moving accounts of the effect of

Restoration of the Odinic Rite was founded by John Yeowell in England. The first American Ásatrú organization, the Viking Brotherhood, was formed in Texas by Stephen McNallen.<sup>67</sup> It is the Viking Brotherhood, later renamed the Ásatrú Free Assembly, to which the organized Ásatrú community in America traces its roots. An early manifesto of the Viking Brotherhood sums up the philosophy of the fledgling Ásatrú movement--and of Stephen McNallen:

A Viking Manifesto [Ásatrú Free Assembly (Viking Brotherhood)]  
The Viking Brotherhood is an organization dedicated to preserving, promoting and practicing the Norse religion as it was epitomized during the Viking Age, and to furthering the moral and ethical values of courage, individualism, and independence which characterized the Viking way of life.

We believe in several gods and goddesses, the chief of whom is Odin, the father of the gods and the god of war, poetry and magic. Thor is also a warrior...

We believe that those who lead a life in accordance with Norse Paganism and who die a death of a hero in battle will be received into Valhalla, the Hall of the Slain. Here, they will ...fight until the last battle, Ragnarök. Those who do not die a worthy death will go down to Hel, a gloomy and cheerless place...

Because of our set of values, we do not "worship" our gods in the usual sense of the word. We do not bend our knee even to Odin, or to petition him, or otherwise deny our individuality and personal sovereignty. The gods are for us intelligent personifications of the forces of the Universe and examples for those of us who follow the Viking Way...

We see a cosmos in conflict--a Universe in which collectivism in its many forms from communism to fascism to Christianity...threatens to destroy forever the individuality which we Vikings cherish...

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that worthy's beatific smile which changed the seeker's life. For just such a touching account, see *The Odinist* 49 (1989), p. 9.

<sup>67</sup> Stephen E. Flowers, "Revival of Germanic Religion in Contemporary Anglo-American Culture," p. 282. Cf. on the Viking Brotherhood, J. Gordon Melton, *The Encyclopedia of American Religions*, Vol. II, (Wilmington, NC: McGrath Publishing, 1978), pp. 296-297.

Finally, we affirm that the Viking Way is open to all regardless of their race or the country of their origin, for it is the mind and heart which identify one as a Viking, not any superficial factor.<sup>68</sup>

This manifesto was one of many produced by the Viking Brotherhood in the early 1970s. It is revealing of the pressures to which the Brotherhood was subjected virtually from its inception by those both within and without the organization to promote a racist, or frankly National Socialist, agenda. In the earliest available document promoting the existence of the Viking Brotherhood, a good deal of attention is given to the social and religious values of the movement. Tracing their descent not only to the Vikings, but to the Germanic tribes and to "Scandinavian, English, Dutch, Frankish, or related peoples..." the Brotherhood lauds the primary values of freedom and individuality, of sacrifice and of pride even before the gods, of family and of individual and collective heroism. Issues of cosmology and theodicy are addressed, as is a frank rejection of Christianity. The ideal of a loose organizational hierarchy composed of a free association of autonomous kindreds is described. But at no time is it thought necessary to expound a view of race or national origin!<sup>69</sup>

While it is impossible to pinpoint a precise date in which Odinism and Ásatrú became distinct entities, it is safe to assume that it was in this formative period of the early 1970s that the race issue became sufficiently compelling that it could no longer be ignored. The 'non-discrimination' policy outlined by Stephen McNallen above may be taken as the 'line in the sand' which epitomized the emerging Ásatrú community's earliest break with Odinism. The differentiation process deepened with the multi-faceted explorations of the religion, mores, and magical heritage bequeathed by pre-Christian Norse/Germanic culture

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<sup>68</sup> J. Gordon Melton, *The Encyclopedia of American Religions: Religious Creeds*, 1st Edition, (Detroit, MI: Gale Research Co., 1988), pp. 754-755.

<sup>69</sup> Stephen McNallen, "Why Ásatrú?" in *Selections From Runestone: An Odinist Anthology* (Grass Valley, CA: Ásatrú Free Assembly, 1983), pp. 3-5.

to its spiritual, if not always genetic descendants<sup>70</sup> which is to this day more typical of Ásatrúers than of Odinists. It can not be overemphasized however, that the Odinist/Ásatrú break offers no clear lines of differentiation. There remained in the Viking Brotherhood, and its immediate successor organization the Ásatrú Free Assembly, strongly racist and even National Socialist adherents, although the latter were decidedly in the minority. The most notable of these was Michael Murray, a self-professed follower of George Lincoln Rockwell's American Nazi Party.<sup>71</sup>

Michael Murray is an interesting case in point of the difficulty inherent in drawing absolute boundaries between Odinism and Ásatrú, as well as illustrating the tensions inherent in movement from its inception to the present day. An early member of the Ásatrú Free Assembly, he brought to the movement undeniable energy and dedication. He in fact remains the driving force today behind one of the AFA's successor groups, the Ásatrú Alliance, and he remains a force in the important Arizona Kindred. To a friend:

...Ásatrú is the primary interest in Murray's life, and he has to some extent sacrificed his career prospects and his family life to it. He is absolutely dedicated to the religion, and will never abandon it or voluntarily withdraw from involvement in it. He is also absolutely convinced that Ásatrú is exclusively a religion for those of Northern European descent, i.e., a white person's religion, and he will resist any movement to open the religion to non-whites. To Murray, the religion and an ethnocentric view of culture and spirituality are inseparable, and he cannot conceive of one without the other. On the other hand, he has actively and consistently resisted the politicization of Ásatrú, and has worked to expel practicing Nazis from the Arizona Kindred and to exclude them from the Ásatrú Alliance. He appears convinced that the revitalization and

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<sup>70</sup> It has always been something of an inside joke in Ásatrú circles that many of the best known leaders of the movement, including Stephen McNallen and Mike Murray, are Irish rather than German or Scandinavian. This however is not seen as a negation of the claim to Viking descent, thanks to the Vikings' notable success in expanding the Nordic gene pool in the normal course of interaction with the female inhabitants of any land playing reluctant host to a Viking war band. It is a point that Stephen Grundy makes in his forthcoming novel, *Rheingold*.

<sup>71</sup> Conversation with Phil Nearing, 25 July 1992. Many others have made this point as well, but prefer to remain anonymous.

resurgence of the Northern European peoples, to which he is committed, must be brought about by religion, and specifically, non-Judeo-Christian religion, and that it will be harmed by the activities of politically-oriented groups such as white supremacists.<sup>72</sup>

It is somewhat ironic, but nonetheless not atypical of small, fledgling religious communities, that relatively marginal issues can often become divisive far out of proportion to their centrality to the religion itself. So it is with race and Ásatrú. Where self-identified Odinists are often drawn to the belief system by pre-existing racialist beliefs, Ásatrúers are a considerably more diverse community for whom racial pride, while important, is in most instances of decidedly secondary importance to the greater considerations of spirituality and the 'remagicalization' of the world.<sup>73</sup> Yet in the small world of Ásatrú, race has become a searing issue, and one which increasingly has become the primary source of division in the movement.

This tension over the issue of race and qualifications for membership would arguably have been manageable had it not been for several organizational features of the early Ásatrú Free Assembly. As documented in the *Viking Manifesto* and *Why Odinism?*, the primary values of individualism and independence precluded the AFA from acting as anything more than an advisory board to those who chose to seek their council. In Steve McNallen's words: "There is no 'Ásapope', and that's the way we like it."<sup>74</sup> Individual kindreds were entirely autonomous, bound to the national organization by ties of *troth*<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Interview with William Bainbridge, 24 January 1993. Other Ásatrúers are of the view that Murray may abandon, or at least modify considerably his exclusionist views on Ásatrú membership. Conversation with DjúpkverkR, 14 November 1992.

<sup>73</sup> Peter Berger, *The Sacred Canopy* (New York: Doubleday, 1967).

<sup>74</sup> Interview with Stephen McNallen, 4 January 1993.

<sup>75</sup> Troth is an important concept which defies simple translation. Technically, the word may be rendered as 'truth' in the sense of loyalty or pledged faithfulness. See Gamlinginn, *The Ordasafn of Gamlinginn*, p. 217. But the term has far deeper connotations to the Ásatrúer, signifying a totalistic way of life reconstructed along the lines of the movement's

and by the submission of dues which brought with it a subscription to the AFA's publication, *Runestone*.<sup>76</sup> The AFA (read McNallen) could and did publish their views through this vehicle, but the idealized Viking notion of equality even before the gods hardly provided much institutional support for the national leaders seek to enforce their views, even if they were so inclined (and in any case, they were not interested in doing anything of the sort).

Adding to the AFA's instability were two additional factors: the somewhat eccentric vehicles through which the AFA advertised its existence, and the concentration of responsibility on the shoulders of Steve McNallen and his wife Maddy Hutter. In his effort to publicize the fledgling movement, McNallen advertised everywhere from a "national magazine dealing with metaphysics and Fortean phenomena"<sup>77</sup> to that bible of armchair mercenaries (and occasional contract killers) *Soldier of Fortune*.<sup>78</sup> This eclecticism could not but bring together an unusual (and somewhat incompatible) mix of people.

Given this egalitarian organizational ethos, McNallen was left with vast work responsibilities, great prestige, and yet little effective power. Modern pagan groups are notorious for cannibalizing leaders through rumor, innuendo and just plain jealousy or simple indifference, rendering any style of leadership virtually ineffective, and all but guaranteeing that any controversy carries within it the seeds of fragmentation--an event

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Golden Age progenitors. For the best treatment of the concept of troth, see Edred Thorsson, *A Book of Troth*.

<sup>76</sup> Conversation with Robert Stine, 1 April 1993.

<sup>77</sup> Interview with Stephen McNallen, 14 January 1993.

<sup>78</sup> Margot Adler, *Drawing Down the Moon*, p. 279; conversation with Phil Nearing, 12 December 1992. Robert Stine who would become a core AFA member, discovered the group through its ad in *Soldier of Fortune*. Interview with Robert Stine, 22-24 December 1992.



which could occur at any time that the leader simply tires of the work load and the conflict.<sup>79</sup> McNallen describes this succinctly:

The AFA foundered for several reasons. For one thing, Maddy and I just burned out. We were each putting in about 60 hours a week on the cause, in addition to my full time job and Maddy's part time employment. The interpersonal hassles contributed as well.<sup>80</sup>

McNallen may have turned for help to others in the organization, but there were at the time factional schisms and simple personality clashes that would have rendered such an option largely ineffective, even had he chosen to go this route.<sup>81</sup> Robert Stine, a core AFA member, recalls that among other actions taken in the twilight of the AFA to streamline and simplify the organization was a decision to stop chartering kindreds, which had the practical effect of cutting some kindreds loose, and managed to arouse great resentment in some quarters.<sup>82</sup>

Robert Stine recalls the waning days of the AFA in similar terms to those of Steve McNallen:

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<sup>79</sup> Wilfred von Dauster, "The Perils of Pagan Leadership," *Mountain Thunder* 5 (1992), pp. 21-23.

<sup>80</sup> Interview with Stephen McNallen, 4 January 1993.

<sup>81</sup> The most colorful of these, thankfully unconnected to the race question for a change, seems to have involved Michael Murray and Edred Thorsson, and the question at issue seems to have centered of Thorsson's renewed quest for the left hand path (Satanism). Thorsson in any case, although having been made a godi (priest) in the AFA in July 1979, had become increasingly distant from the group as he followed his *wyrd* (fated path). Clearly, Murray found the Temple of Set connection unhealthy for the survival of the movement, and had no hesitation about saying so. Thus, when the AFA breakup came in 1978, Thorsson would express great anger at McNallen for "allowing the Raven Banner (the symbol of our endeavor to re-establish the elder troth in the world today) to fall," and for not having contacted him to help with the AFA when the burden became too great. Interview with Edred Thorsson, 20 September 1992. Thorsson simply was not present, and neither was Murray, while Steve McNallen was simply not one to delegate authority readily. Interview with Robert Stine, 22-24 December 1992.

<sup>82</sup> Conversation with Robert Stine, 4 April 1993.

We, Stephen McNallen, his wife Maddy Hutter, Kelly LaZatte, my wife, and yours truly, made the AFA too large of a monster for us to control, it thus broke free and devoured us...I went to the first Texas Althing, and had a great time, the second Texas Althing I attended I stayed there...We moved the AFA headquarters from Steve's house into an office/store front in downtown, in Breckenridge, Texas. All was going well, I guess the sign I painted for the storefront is still there. Then the Texas economy went bust, I lost my job, in short order Steve lost his job, Kelly and I lived on what she could make doing laundry in an old folks home, Steve and Maddy lived on savings, we held on trying to make it, the AFA could not make enough to support us, so I was determined to get out.<sup>83</sup>

Yet it is clear in retrospect that even had these problems of organization and leadership been solved, the doom of the AFA was probably inevitable, and once again, race played a role in the group's demise which, while still a relatively minor factor, was far out of proportion to its importance in the reconstruction of the tradition. For the AFA, despite its highly decentralized organizational character, was no mere mail order church. Rather, the emotional heart of Ásatrú is community, and numerous local and regional gatherings for seasonal religious ceremonies (*blot*), for *sumbels* (religious ceremonies characterized by ritual drinking behavior) and for folk moots (general gatherings for primarily social purposes) are in fact celebrations of this communal spirit. At the apex of these gatherings however, is the Althing, a national assembly of kindreds gathered for religious ceremony, competitive games, and unlike other Ásatrú gatherings, to discuss political as well as well as social topics, and to determine the organizational policies to be pursued during the coming year. These Althings are free gatherings of equals, and the parameters of debate are virtually unlimited. At these gatherings, race could be politely ignored by the leadership, but debate on the issue, like criticism of the leadership itself, could not be stifled. It was the Althings which brought the inherent tensions and contradictions of the

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<sup>83</sup> Interview with Robert Stine, 22-24 December 1992.

AFA to a head. It must be emphasized however, that the primary purpose of the Althing in the minds of most of those who attend is a weekend of fun, mead (honey wine), athletic contests, and most of all, good conversation. But when talk turns to more substantive matters, cleavages soon become apparent. Tempers could become frayed, and the rhetoric could turn hot. Seldom however, did any thing genuinely untoward occur at AFA Althings. One such incident, tied less to race than more general prejudices, at the AFA's second Althing:

I first met Mike [Murray] at my first Althing [in Texas], he seemed no stranger than some of the others I met there. The second Althing I was at Mike was downright scary, he arrived late in the evening in a van with 3 other fellows. Steve [McNallen] greeted them and they stood around the van talking and drinking beer for half an hour or so, then suddenly Mike went off in a very angry tone, and I heard him say, "Why don't we just kill the fucking faggot" and he rummaged in the van for a few seconds and produced a MAC-10. At this, I returned to my tent, for I knew what was going on. I had already been at the Althing site for several days, and two days before a postman from San Francisco had arrived at the Thing. A young fellow, tall blond, well made, and gay. Kelly and I had entertained him for the past couple of days waiting for others to arrive, he was a delightful fellow that I liked very much, but I was soon to learn that Homosexuality and Ásatrú do not mix. This poor fellow was shunned, publicly humiliated, and made to swear that he would change his sexual preference, or leave Ásatrú. Really bad shit they put this guy through, this is when the custom of everyone having his own personal drinking horn came into vogue, the rightwingers were afraid to drink after a "cocksucker," their words, not mine. There was not much I could do to help him, we said our good-bys and left the thing early.<sup>84</sup>

More will be heard of Mike Murray later, however, lest these quotes leave an entirely one-sided picture of the man, it is important to note that even his detractors--and he has a remarkable quantity of these--do not hesitate to point out that Murray cares deeply

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<sup>84</sup> Interview with Robert Stine, 22-24 December 1992. Bob Stine is himself an interesting illustration of the contradictions--and possibilities--inherent in Ásatrú. As a young man, he was loosely involved in Ku Klux Klan and Nazi party activities, but following a stint in the army, turned away from these groups, and today along with Phil Nearing, is one of the strongest opponents of racialism or prejudice in Ásatrú.

about the religion, and that he is genuinely committed to the spirit of open dialogue and equality which is the heart of the troth relationship. Examples are many, but two will suffice to make the point. With the 1987 break-up of the AFA, Murray was left with corpse of the organization which he revitalized as the Ásatrú Alliance. Under the Alliance's auspices, the Arizona Kindred journal, *Vor Trú*, continued publication as the official voice of the Alliance, and in these pages the AFA tradition of free criticism of anyone and anything—including Mike Murray, carried on.<sup>85</sup> Nor has time eroded Murray's spirit of open debate. At Althing 12 in 1992, when Gamlinginn rose to make a speech denouncing racism and urging that Ásatrú be opened to anyone who was interested and who would not harm the movement, Murray welcomed him and his words were well received by those who heard it.<sup>86</sup>

At the same time however, the presence of racist and National Socialist adherents at Althings, and within the AFA, was a problem which could no longer be ignored.<sup>87</sup> The struggle for the soul of the movement which continues to this day was being waged in earnest, and the pressures on Stephen McNallen were formidable. McNallen was in an increasingly difficult position. His own politics would appear to fit comfortably into the right wing of the political spectrum.<sup>88</sup> In the combined Ásatrú and Odinist communities

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<sup>85</sup> Interview with Wilfred von Dauster, 31 March 1993. Murray in fact, is not above self-criticism. See Mike Murray, "The State of the Alliance," *Vor Trú* 31 (Yule/Winter 1988), pp. 6-9.

<sup>86</sup> Interview with Gamlinginn, 14 October 1992.

<sup>87</sup> For example, Stephen McNallen, "Nazi Exploitation Blocked!" *Runestone* 25 (1978), pp. 13-14.

<sup>88</sup> A good illustration of this point is contained in a 31 December 1992 letter commenting on an article which noted the irony of Christian fundamentalists in some states targeting Ásatrúers as 'enemies' given certain affinities between Stephen McNallen's political philosophy and those of mainstream Protestant fundamentalists:

"I think that it's fairer to say that we share certain values with Fundamentalists...My biggest reservation, the one that prompts my comment, is on the matter of tolerance. I think most Asafolk [Ásatrúers] are more tolerant than most fundamentalists, in general.

however, that political spectrum changes considerably, and McNallen suddenly becomes very much the man of the center--and thus a legitimate target for sniping by both sides.<sup>89</sup>

As Althing 7 in 1987, the last year of the AFA's existence, approached, it was clear that the leadership of the group, exhausted, frustrated and bankrupt, simply would not be able to organize the event.<sup>90</sup> In desperation, McNallen tried at the eleventh hour to delegate responsibility for the AFA to a committee consisting of such core members as Steve McNallen and Maddy Hutter, Mike Murray, Alice Karlsdóttir, Robert Stine, Ariel Bentley, John Parmenger and a few others. The committee, styling itself the Southern Heathen Leadership Conference, met once and issued a single document which in effect divided the responsibility for various AFA functions between committee members, froze applications for new membership, and announced that McNallen and Hutter would be taking a much deserved and long overdue vacation.<sup>91</sup> It was a futile effort as McNallen would have remained saddled with the continued responsibility of editing and publishing *Runestone*. In the end, McNallen went off to California, the committee drifted apart, *Runestone* was folded, and the Ásatrú Free Assembly, formerly the Viking Brotherhood, was dead. Even as the AFA was in its death throes however, two very different successor organizations were poised to take up the Raven Banner.

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Still, as noted and quoted, we do have some opinions in common--family, less government intervention, and the like."

Letter from Stephen McNallen, 31 December 1992.

<sup>89</sup> Conversation with Robert Stine, 1 April 93. Stine recalls McNallen saying several times that he was a racist, but the race issue was simply not important enough to risk the survival of the movement--and its tax free status--in a pointless political crusade. McNallen would often follow the declaration with the rhetorical question, "who among you do not feel your family is the best and most deserving?" Interview with Robert Stine, 23-24 December 1992.

<sup>90</sup> Ironically, while the AFA's leaders were in dire straights, the organizational remained fiscally sound. Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Letter addressed to all AFA members from the Southern Heathen Leadership Conference, May/June 1987.

It is of some significance that two national associations emerged from the ashes of the AFA. These groups, the Ásatrú Alliance and the Ring of Troth, came to represent the contentions surrounding the central dichotomy of the AFA: the more politicized, racist majority of the AFA,<sup>92</sup> and those for whom the magical and scholarly potential of the movement were at the forefront of the reconstruction of the Norse/Germanic religion, and for whom race was either of little interest or for whom racist thought was anathema. Before taking up the cases of these still extant groups however, Steve McNallen's retrospective analysis of the lessons of the AFA's demise deserve careful consideration, for they echo the findings of adherents of virtually every millenarian/messianic movement documented in the pages of this dissertation; disappointment that the original dreams of widespread public acceptance of the new religious movement was not to be, frustration with the indifferent results of public outreach, the determination to make a virtue of necessity and to aim for the recruitment of a dedicated and highly qualified 'righteous remnant' rather than the formation of a mass movement, and a quest for a contemporary 'model for emulation' whose comparative success may provide useful lessons for the movement.<sup>93</sup>

One of the hardest-learned lessons from the old AFA...was this; the time has not come for widespread public acceptance of Ásatrú. At one point we exposed a million or so readers to our beliefs in a newspaper article that was published coast-to-coast. The

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid. Once again, the racism present in the AFA and in its successor, the Ásatrú Alliance, was of a considerably different character from that prevalent among Odinists--a point that will be documented at greater depth in the discussion of the Ásatrú Alliance below.

<sup>93</sup> This dynamic is beautifully illustrated in the fictional work of Andrew Macdonald (William Pierce) in his successive 'utopian' novels, *The Turner Diaries* and *Hunter*, in which the former exudes confidence that a White revolution could succeed in America, while the latter aspires at best to the survival of a lone assassin in a hostile world. Andrew Macdonald (pseud.), *The Turner Diaries* (Arlington, Va.: National Vanguard Books, 1978); Andrew Macdonald (pseud.), *Hunter* (Arlington, Va.: National Vanguard Books, 1989).

piece in question presented the AFA fairly and in some detail. Nevertheless, we received exactly *two* inquiries as a result.<sup>94</sup> ...We must be content, for now, to grow slowly. We must seek quality rather than quantity...

The Wiccans did this for years (or centuries, if you believe modern Wiccan claims to an unbroken, ancient lineage). Do any of you remember the early 1960s, before the incredible cultural upheavals that came with the second half of that decade? "Witchcraft," as it was called then, was a genuine underground phenomenon. You just didn't breeze into a local coven, get initiated shortly thereafter, and start dancing naked around a cauldron in someone's apartment. Applicants were carefully screened and underwent a more or less rigorous education before being accepted by the group. By being selective, covens were able to sink their roots deeply and develop depth--depth of vision, depth of commitment, and depth of knowledge. When the time was right for Wicca to emerge into the considerable fame it has enjoyed in recent years, its practitioners were able to take advantage of that fact...

On the other hand, Ásafolk should support any efforts that will educate the public about our Gods or the society with which they are most identified, namely, the Vikings. One reason that the time is not right for mass conversions to Ásatrú is that the average person has no knowledge of history; he or she has no conceptual context into which Ásatrú could fit. For this reason, we should boost Leif Erikson Day, wear T-shirts with a Viking theme, join the Sons of Norway, get the local library to purchase books on Norse history...

The result is a two-pronged approach: one underground and one above ground. Each compliments the other...<sup>95</sup>

### The Ásatrú Alliance

McNallen's advice was offered in 1990 to the Ásatrú Alliance; a fitting enough venue as the Alliance is the heir to as much of the original Ásatrú Free Assembly's form and spirit as can be said to survive today. The Alliance emerged quickly from the ashes of

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<sup>94</sup> McNallen's disappointment recalls the discouragement noted by Identity pastor Carl Schott whose advertisement in *U.S. News and World Report* brought back only 700 letters of inquiry (and this figure appears highly exaggerated!). See Karl F. Schott, "Reaching Out With the Gospel of the Kingdom By Way of U. S. News and World Report," *The Pathfinder* (May-1992), p. 2-4; and Karl F. Schott, "From the Pastor," *The Pathfinder* (April-1992), p. 2.

<sup>95</sup> Stephen A. McNallen, "On the Growth of Ásatrú," *Vor Trú* 38 (Fall 2240/1990), pp.7-8.

the AFA, thanks largely to the energy of Mike Murray and to the resources of the Arizona Kindred, centered in Payson, Arizona. So swift was the AA's emergence that Althing 8 was organized and held in Arizona in June, 1988. Some controversy developed over the successor to McNallen's *Runestone*, which until its (and the AFA's) demise in 1987 had served as the official organ of the AFA. Apparently slated to replace *Runestone* was a journal created for that purpose by the Colorado Kindred, *Ancestral Faith*. However, having completed the task of organizing the Alliance, the decision was made to drop the Colorado journal in favor of the Arizona Kindred's own house organ, *Vor Trú*. *Vor Trú*, edited by Arizona Kindred president, Thorsteinn Thorarinsson was affirmed by a vote of the delegates attending Althing 8 and was expanded to serve as the national voice of the Ásatrú Alliance.<sup>96</sup> The Colorado Kindred in turn elected to withdraw from the Alliance.<sup>97</sup> The victory's importance went beyond symbolism, for with control of the only organ of communication between the constituent kindreds and the national organization, and with the Arizona Kindred's Mike Murray acting as Lawspeaker (effectively, the president), the Arizona Kindred in practice controlled the organization.

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<sup>96</sup> Mike Murray, "Ancestral Faith Vs. Vor Trú?" *Vor Trú* 30 (Haust/Fall 2238 R.E./1988), p. 9. *Vor Trú* emphasizes news from the various AA kindreds, and presents lively policy discussions and arguments over a range of issues effecting the Alliance. It publishes historical and religious essays as well, but here the quality is, at best, uneven. The Ring of Troth's *Idunna* features far stronger scholarly articles as well as imaginative rituals and compelling debates on questions of greater interest to scholars and graduate students than to the general population of Ásatrúers. A common lament in the Ásatrú community in fact is that *Idunna* too often reads like a term paper. Of the national journals, the ideal compromise appears to be *Mountain Thunder*. *Mountain Thunder*, edited by Wilfred von Dauster in Colorado, is a lively 'middle way' between the 'bulletin board' which is *Vor Trú* and the graduate seminar which is *Idunna*; lively, well written, and featuring a mix of scholarship, ritual, art and poetry--as well as some astonishingly liberal (for Ásatrú standards) polemics. Significantly, *Mountain Thunder* is independent of any national organization or local kindred, and thus need answer only to its editor and his subscribers. On *Mountain Thunder*, interview with Wilfred von Dauster, 31 March 1993. A number of other Ásatrú publications exist as well, most produced by local kindreds, and a few represent distinct sub-groups or guilds within Ásatrú. The most colorful of these may have been *The Frothing Vat*, the organ of the Brewer's Gild, a selfless band of Ásatrúers fanatically dedicated to the creation of the ultimate mead!

<sup>97</sup> *Vor Trú* 30 (Haust/Fall 2238 R.E./1988), p. 9.



At Althing 8, a group of delegates drawn from member kindreds were selected to write the By-Laws of the fledgling Ásatrú Alliance. The committee was comprised of Mike Murray, Dan West, Phil Nearing, Robert Taylor, Ornulf Volden, Alice Rhoades, and Paal-Eirik Filssunnu. Don Terhune and Robert Courtney represented those attending the Althing as independents (i.e., those without kindreds).<sup>98</sup> The by-laws would be amended with every Althing, but the basic thrust of the By-Laws set at Althing 8 would endure with few major changes to this day. The decisions taken were structured into the four categories: General tenets, Kindred definition and rules for membership, individual membership requirements and Althing voting procedures.

Of the seven general tenets adopted on 18 June 1988, several prominent themes emerge. The Alliance is described as a free association of kindreds and individuals, and shall be organized along tribal/democratic lines (neither term is defined), but of greater import, the AA is to be "apolitical; it is not a front for, nor shall it promote any political views of the 'Right' or 'Left'."<sup>99</sup> The Alliance (unlike the Ring of Troth) was to have no established priesthood, and would promote itself through publications and regional moots and things. The publishing however, would be the exclusive preserve of the Arizona Kindred. Finally, a spokesperson would be elected and would be empowered to represent the AA between Althings in all its affairs, and this leader would not be allowed to stand for reelection.<sup>100</sup>

Kindred membership requirements were straightforward. Any kindred of at least three members would be allowed to join or leave the organization at will, shall hold meetings regularly although the AA pledges strict non-interference in local matters, and each would be assessed the sum of ten dollars per member to support *Vor Trú*. Finally,

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., p. 17. Race is implicit here, but is not mentioned explicitly.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

any kindred could be expelled "for cause" by a vote of the majority of Althing delegates.<sup>101</sup>

Individual membership requirements deal mostly with dues and the option of full or associate membership, while the four standing procedural rules are most notable for the requirement that the By-Laws be reconsidered at every Althing.<sup>102</sup>

While the near total control of the Alliance by the Arizona Kindred appeared at first to portend the accession of the racist views of Mike Murray, in practice, the middle ground policies of Steve McNallen's leadership of the AFA won the day. The explanation for this turn of events probably lies in Murray's genuine dedication to the movement and his determination, whatever his personal view, to serve the By-Laws' mandate that the AA be a non-political religious organization. More, in the AFA Murray had the luxury of radicalism, knowing that McNallen could and would act to prevent serious damage to the organization. He in effect could play Loki to McNallen's Odin--the gadfly who would let pass no opportunity for mischief, but who in the end would bend to the will of the gods and bring benefit to all.<sup>103</sup> Now, with the mantle of leadership on his own shoulders, Murray would be forced to act with prudence in the interest of protecting the organization. Thus, when Murray faced his first challenge from National Socialist ranks, he reacted in precisely the way McNallen had in 1978 when he held a press conference in San Francisco

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<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> In fact, opinions differ as to how central a role Murray played in the waning days of the AFA. Of those watching the group self-destruct in Breckenridge Texas, Robert Stine recalls that Murray was nowhere to be found when he was most needed. Steve McNallen notes that Murray is a friend who has shown "heroic strength and endurance in his devotion to Ásatrú," but he is not now "in close or continual correspondence." Conversation with Robert Stine, 4 April 1993; Interview with Stephen McNallen, 4 January 1993.

which denounced a local NS group for billing themselves as Odinist in order to gain access to public meeting space.<sup>104</sup>

The occasion for this event was a 1988 issue of *Speaking Out*, an eccentric National Socialist publication of the New Dawn, an organization whose leader (and only known member) is Michael Merritt of Burbank, California.<sup>105</sup> Following long standing practice in racist right wing circles, Merritt apparently having in his possession an issue of *Vor Trú* (which list the names and addresses of all AA member kindreds), published this information, implying that these kindreds were in agreement with National Socialist ideals.<sup>106</sup> This publicity clearly displeased some of the effected kindreds, and Murray was left with the task of contacting Merritt and insisting that Murray's letter of protest be published in the next issue of *Speaking Out*, and that Merritt cease to publish this directory in the future. The key section of Murray's letter read:

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<sup>104</sup> Stephen E. Flowers, "Revival of Germanic Religion in Contemporary Anglo-American Culture," p. 280, n. 2.

<sup>105</sup> New Dawn promotes the idea that National Socialism and Hitler cultists in general are perceived in such negative terms by the American public that the ideals of National Socialism will never be implemented unless the name and rhetoric are radically revised. Merritt's mission in essence is to put 'old wine in new bottles' by marketing National Socialism as the New Philosophy and American Socialism. See Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, *Extremism on the Right: A Handbook*, p. 48.

<sup>106</sup> This irresponsible publication policy continues unabated today, with Joe Dilys as the current chief font of networking information. Dilys will provide on request, free of charge, mimeographed lists of the names and addresses of a variety of right wing groups in America and abroad. These lists are divided into general categories (general religious, Identity, anti-communist, racial, etc.), but a close examination reveals the presence of groups which would be appalled to be included in such company. As general religious racist groups, the moderate British-Israel World Federation is listed with Aryan Nations and several apolitical Sacred Name communities are thrown in for good measure, as are the Earth First Ecopagans (!). Dilys' list of Odinists is appended to his May 1991 list of National Socialist groups, and groups together the Odinist Study Group of Ron Hand discussed above, decidedly non-National Socialist AA members such as the relatively moderate Arizona Kindred, the eccentric National Socialist Ocean Kindred, Chicago's tiny Wulfing Kindred, Dan West's extreme (and tiny) racist group, Thor's Hammer Kindred, and the strongly anti-racist Old Northwest Kindred.

The Alliance does not advocate any type of political or racial extremist views or affiliations. We do not support the *New Dawn* nor share its views.<sup>107</sup>

In introducing Michael Merritt's reply to the *Vor Trú* readership, Murray, whose own past NS connections give his words a ring of expertise on the subject of wannabe storm troopers, states that Merritt "betrays his apparent lack of maturity by slandering the Alliance with typical drugstore Nazi epithets."<sup>108</sup> The letter itself, resonant with the self-important--and yet as Murray accurately points out, childish pique--so prevalent in much of the internecine polemics of contemporary National Socialism,<sup>109</sup> deserves to be reproduced in its entirety:

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<sup>107</sup> Letter dated 11 August 1988 published in *Vor Trú* 30 (Haust/Fall 2238 R.E./1988), p. 12. *The New Dawn* was another of the several interchangeable publications issued by New Dawn.

<sup>108</sup> *Vor Trú* 30 (Haust/Fall 2238 R.E./1988), p. 13.

<sup>109</sup> While the schoolyard rant of most internecine NS disputes invariably do plumb the depths of the infantile, it is also true that a thoughtful communication (perhaps by virtue of its rarity), will sometimes receive a thoughtful answer. Such is the case of an exchange of letters between Old Northwest Kindred leader Phil Nearing and Mike Merritt. Nearing, in a series of letters, attempts to dissuade Merritt from further use of AA addresses in his publications, and more, to see if some bridge of reasoned communication could be built towards Merritt. It is ultimately a dialogue of the deaf, but a thoughtful dialogue, in which Nearing expresses disgust for NS intolerance, accurately suggesting that racial pride, reverence for the Teutonic heritage, and for the 'strength of the Folk' has no need for the denigration of others of different folk or faith. This elicits a reply by Merritt which concedes German atrocities against Jews, Gypsies and others in WWII (although pointing out that these actions do not make Germany unique among nations in the 20th century). Yet it is on the personal level that Merritt's reply most demands consideration, revealing as it does the psychology behind the internecine war of words:

I always try to be a mirror of the person that I am writing to. If he uses "cheap shots" then naturally I will use them to [sic] (as much as I really hate to; I think that emotional response is really important--if a person isn't willing to get all worked-up about what he believes then maybe he doesn't really believe it as much as he thinks he does; and of course, it is important to make writing as enjoyable and amusing as possible, otherwise answering a hundred letters (when you could be going to the mountains or the beach) becomes a drudge.

Letter for Michael Merritt to Phil Nearing, 25 November 1988. The exchange of four letters took place in October and November 1988.

Dear Mr. Murray:

We are in receipt of your letter dated August 11, 1988, and regret to inform you that your request has been denied.

From time-to-time we publish addresses and information that may be of interest to our readers. You and your so-called "kindreds" have no control over what we publish both now and in the future.

The New Dawn does not associate with any type of political or racial cowardice. We do not support the Ásatrú Alliance nor share its views.

Furthermore, we feel that the tone of your letter betrays your so-called Norse-Pagan beliefs, by your fear of what the Jews and their lackeys will think.

We therefore must condemn this infantile attitude, and consequently remove you cry-babies from our mailing list.

Sincerely,

Michael Merritt,  
Executive Director

P.S.: "Ásatrú cry-babies"-now there's an epitaph.<sup>110</sup>

A number of issues would roil the pages of *Vor Trú* in the years between Althing 8 in 1988 and Althing 12 in 1992 (both in Arizona),<sup>111</sup> but none would be as divisive as that of race. Mike Murray, like Steve McNallen before him, was in the unenviable position of occupying a middle ground in which all views could be accommodated within the Alliance,

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<sup>110</sup> *Vor Trú* 30 (Haust/Fall 2238 R.E./1988), p. 13. There is a serious side to this verbal food fight of which McNallen, and probably Murray, were well aware. Not only was the the Alliance on New Dawn's mailing list, but it is a certainty that such watchdog organizations as the Anti-Defamation League are also charter subscribers. That the AA kindreds appear in a New Dawn publication is sufficient in these circles to brand Ásatrú as a neo-Nazi movement. On this process, see Jeffrey Kaplan, "The Anti-Cult Movement in America: An History of Culture Perspective," *Syzygy* (forthcoming), or for the relevant documents in full, see Chapter 6.

<sup>111</sup> The most intense (and interesting) of these debates centered on the revelation of Edred Thorsson's membership in the Temple of Set. This will be considered at greater length in the discussion of the Ring of Troth below.

but the organization itself would of necessity be kept clear of violating its By-Laws by taking an official position. This pressure was played out in the pages of *Vor Trú*, and more devastatingly, at Althing 9. Most revealing of the irrevocability of the split between Odinists and Ásatrúers however--and of Murray's own disagreeable task--are a series of letters published in the open forum of *Vor Trú*.

A key front in the contest between Odinism and Ásatrú as they are defined here is found in the prisons. Throughout the 1980s, Odinist centers have conducted--invariably at the request of the inmates themselves--an important outreach ministry in the prisons of America.<sup>112</sup> There, Odinism competes with Christian Identity for the allegiance of white racist prisoners.<sup>113</sup> Ásatrú however, is rarely mentioned in the prison context, and if truth be told, most Ásatrúers would not have it any other way. It was therefore something of a surprise when Murray published in the pages of *Vor Trú* a letter from Kevin Hunt, a prisoner in the Nebraska prison system. The letter itself was remarkable for having eschewed any but the most elliptical reference to race, concentrating instead on an emotional paean to the gods, and centered on the declaration that life in prison is "a constant battle, filled with pain and anger, sorrow and bitterness, but from the bonding of each brother of our kindred and the help from Ásatrú folk in the free world, we can find sanctuary from all this."<sup>114</sup> Murray's reply is instructive of the strongly negative feelings

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<sup>112</sup> Else Christensen continues to conduct such a ministry, where she counsils non-violence and, in recent years, a process of cooperation with, and in fact, learning from, Nation of Islam prisoners. Interview with Else Christensen, 27 November 1992. Cf. "Kwanza," *The Odinist* 137 (1991), p. 1. The Odinist Study Group in Indiana too, until recently, conducted a significant prison ministry.

<sup>113</sup> For a microcosmic look at this contest, see the Aryan Nations prison outreach, "Letters," *The Way* (June 1987), p. 6. This is noted as well in Jeffrey Kaplan, "The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel," *Journal of Terrorism and Political Violence* 5:1 (Spring 1993).

<sup>114</sup> Kevin Hunt, "An Open Letter to the Ásatrú Community," *Vor Trú* 33 (Midyear/Summer 2239/1989), p. 19.

aroused by prisoners among most Ásatrúers--an aversion that appears to be centered largely on radical expressions of racism and in the threat that these prisoners may present to the Ásatrú community upon release.<sup>115</sup>

These fellows are not a bunch of racist punks. They are sincerely trying to practice their ancestral faith within the walls of the prison. They hold regular gatherings where their families join them from the outside and hope to join the mainstream of the Ásatrú community after they have paid their debt to society. I believe they are worthy of our support and encouragement.<sup>116</sup>

If Kevin Hunt is no racist punk, the same could not be said for Dane, the self styled spokesman for the Ram's Horn Kindred, the Tyr's Song Kindred, the Kindred Motorcycle Club, and the New York State Odinist Prisoners Alliance. Responding to an essay from Australian Kim Peart which stated that Viking society was in no sense racist, and that the Ásatrú community too should be open to any race or previous faith,<sup>117</sup> Dane presents a succinct encapsulation of the Odinism of the Order's Robert Mathews and of the most strongly racist members of white Odinist prison groups. Of more immediate import, his letter points out in graphic terms how little middle ground there would be between the more

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<sup>115</sup> Interview with Djúpkerkr, 30 December 1992. Gert McQueen, a member of the High Rede of the Ring of Troth, has considered a prison ministry, but the idea died for lack of support. Letter from Gert McQueen, 14 December 1992. An interesting exchange along these lines took place in 1992 with Gamlinginn's strongly anti-racist speech at Althing 12 which suggested the exclusion from Ásatrú only those who are genuinely evil or those who would be "perceived as unsavory" by the general public (both of these appeared to be aimed principally, if elliptically, at Edred Thorsson, with prisoners of at best secondary importance). Ted Shelton, a prisoner who concedes that his own criminal record would indeed be considered unsavory, argues that he has since reformed and deserves to be part of the Ásatrú community. Gamlinginn replies that, while this may well be unfair to Mr. Shelton and those like him, the practical importance of establishing Ásatrú as a living religion overrides the interests of any individual Ásatrúer. For the text of the Althing speech, see Gamlinginn, "Speech at Althing 12 of the Ásatrú Alliance (22-24 May 1992)," *Mountain Thunder* 5 (1992), pp. 4-5. For the exchange of letters, see "Letters," *Mountain Thunder* 6 (1992), pp. 2, 28.

<sup>116</sup> Kevin Hunt, "An Open Letter to the Ásatrú Community," p. 19.

<sup>117</sup> "Letters to the Editor," *Vor Trú* 37 (Summer 2240/1990), pp. 24-26.

strongly racist Odinists and even the most right wing strain of Ásatrú. The very fact that Kim Peart's offending letter was published in *Vor Trú*, which is seen with some justice as being heavily tied to the Arizona Kindred, is posited by Dane as evidence that the Alliance in general, and the Arizona Kindred in particular, are race traitors and, if it were possible, would be subject to a war of reprisal.

...our community has determined that our people have once again been misled and that the Arizona Kindred is promoting the corruption of our folk through bastardization, mongrelization and assimilation which is not only suicide but genocide; and that our communities must not only distance ourselves from the Alliance, but demand a Holy war, so to speak, so that the Alliance will remove the corruptors or discontinue referring to itself as Odinist.

Our offense at his statements are such that were he a representative of a nation, we would declare war against such an insult...Perhaps he should more closely study the "Havamal" and the Eddas...

We've been educating and gathering those who hear the call. You people get tired of fantasy island and pretending and heed the words of the High One--life is struggle, not fun and games. Awaken or perish. We serve Asgard.<sup>118</sup>

The letter, with its dire warnings of 'corruptors' and 'holy war', its reference to the primacy of sacred text,<sup>119</sup> and its clear chiliastic aspirations, reads as something very much akin to texts emanating from the radical wing of Christian Identity.<sup>120</sup> In his reply,

<sup>118</sup> "Letter to Ed" *Vor Trú* 38 (Fall 2240/1990), p.26.

<sup>119</sup> There is a small contingent of Ásatrúers, and a much larger (but harder to document) group of Odinists, who take the *Hávamál* and to a lesser degree the remaining Eddic material, to be inerrant sacred text. Interview with Wilfred von Dauster, 31 March 1993. In fact, the Eddas were redacted in the Christian era, effectively negating claims to pagan purity.

<sup>120</sup> This affinity of view between Odinists and Identity adherents made for the smooth functioning of the Order. For a criticism of this cooperation from the Identity perspective, see Richard Kelly Hoskins, *Vigilantes of Christendom* (Lynchburg, Va.: Virginia Publishing Co., 1990), pp. 435-442. The language too is strongly suggestive of the English language pronouncements of Islamist activists as recorded in the popular press. The terminology is so closely tied a manichaean strain of the Abrahamic traditions that it is likely to have been borrowed from Islamist rather than pagan sources. The suspicion that this is the case is strengthened by Dane's incarceration--an environment in which National of Islam rhetoric employing terminology such as this is rife.



Mike Murray draws a distinction between Odinist values and those of Ásatrú. Beginning with a lecture on the value of free speech and the role of *Vor Trú* in promoting discourse within the community, Murray concludes:

If Ásatrú is indeed the embodiment of freedom for our Folk, we should remain diligent and defend freedom of thought and expression in the pages of *Vor Trú*. Many of the most controversial letters and articles represent the thoughts of a very small minority of our readers, but yet the majority should be aware of what others who claim to be Ásatrú hold to be true.

For the record, *Vor Trú* is a journal of Ásatrú. Never once in our pages have we stated that we are Odinist.<sup>121</sup>

While Mike Murray's balancing act between the extremes of racist and non-racist Ásatrú opinion--a neutrality mandated by the organization's By-Laws--could be maintained indefinitely in the pages of *Vor Trú*, the annual Althings were a different story. Here, the question of race could not be dealt with as an issue of abstract policy. Rather, the subject quickly became enmeshed in emotional ties of friendship, sworn brotherhood, and in the end, of perceived betrayal. Such was the case of Althing 9, held in Arizona in 1989.

There exist in Alliance circles a number of versions of events at Althing 9, but what is most striking is the remarkable consistency of accounts regarding the event. More remarkable still, and largely unknown to the Ásatrú community, there exists a two hour tape recording of the central confrontation at the Althing 9 Council which has been made

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<sup>121</sup> "Letter to Ed" *Vor Trú* 38 (Fall 2240/1990), p.26. Once again, Else Christensen, speaking from an Odinist perspective:

We have kept contact with [white prisoners who have] scared AA [Ásatrú Alliance] people stiff, but for example, one of the former hard core has recently written me that he finally realize[d] that he was on the wrong track...There has [sic] been other individuals like that, and I cut another notch on my rune stave, so to speak.

Interview with Else Christensen, 27 November 1992.

available to this research. What follows then is pieced together from interviews with participants from both camps, supplemented with material from the cassette record. Together, these provide a valuable insight into the powerful emotive ties which bind individual Ásatrúers, as well as the centrifugal forces which so often rend small, tightly bound religious communities. It is important to keep in mind however, that while the underlying issue was racialism in the Alliance, at no time does the subject appear to have been addressed directly. Rather, the battle was waged over the interpretation of the Alliance By-Laws, and more centrally, over the meaning of a flag, over the ties of troth and blood brotherhood, and, in the minds of some, over the soul of the movement. Interestingly enough, at the time the subject was raised by the Old Northwest Kindred, the deliberations of the Council were engrossed in the damage to the movement which Edred Thorsson's involvement in the Temple of Set had brought about. The sudden change of subject caught the Council completely by surprise.<sup>122</sup>

It is the suddenness of the confrontation which most stands out in the recollections of those interviewed in this research. Indeed, it is inconceivable to some that the Old Northwest Kindred had not arrived at the Althing site with a preconceived agenda, and many afterward felt that they and the Alliance had been manipulated by the Old Northwest Kindred.<sup>123</sup> However, at least until the Althing was actually in progress, this does not seem to have been the case.

The Old Northwest Kindred, at the time centered in Chicago with about a dozen members, arrived at the Althing site early and were guests in the home of Mike Murray in Payson, Arizona. Four members had made the trip, Phil Nearing (who was to be elected to replace Mike Murray as Speaker of the Alliance), Robert Stine, another long time Ásatrúer

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<sup>122</sup> Cassette recording of Althing 9, June 1989. Conversation with Phil Nearing, 4 April 1993.

<sup>123</sup> Conversation with William Bainbridge, 3 April 1993.

and head of the Brewers' Guild,<sup>124</sup> and Scott Enslin (aka Bagelwolf). All drove to Arizona in the same car, and while there was apparently some tension within the group, nothing was planned or said about provoking a confrontation at the Althing.

This is not to say that the issue was far from the minds of the members of the Old Northwest Kindred. Some aspects of Althing 8 had left a bad aftertaste among members of this group. There were a cadre of National Socialists at the earlier event, although they tended to be relegated to the periphery. One incident did occur, although few at the time seemed aware of the incident. One kindred from the Washington state area attended, bringing in tow the Wiccan/Jewish wife of one of the members. This became known, and some objections were raised to her presence, apparently by California adherent Dan West (aka Redbeard, King of the Thor's Hammer Kindred).<sup>125</sup> Most however, followed the lead of the women from the Arizona Kindred and went out of their way to make her feel welcome.<sup>126</sup> The racialism that was present at Althing 8 however, had a particularly negative effect on the head of the Brewers Guild, who pointed out that if the racists in AA were left unchallenged, they would simply bring in their friends and subvert the movement, and Scott Enslin, whose mother was Jewish, leaving him with an obvious distaste for expressions of anti-Semitism.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> This adherent has since left active participation in Ásatrú and is pursuing Ph. D. studies at a university in the Midwest. For this reason, his name will be withheld.

<sup>125</sup> Conversation with Phil Nearing, 4 April 1993. Thor's Hammer Kindred are remembered as one of the most extreme proponents of racialism in the AA. Also known as the Troll Kindred for the remarkable physical ugliness of the members of the group, Thor's Hammer Kindred won a measure of renown when, in the latter days of the AFA, the group demonstrated its disgust with McNallen's failure to adopt an openly racist position and for his having ended the practice of chartering kindreds by returning its charter document with a .44 caliber bullet hole in it. Some, speaking on condition of anonymity, interpreted this as a death threat, and note that McNallen may have received several of these in this period. Others however, were simply amused--and somewhat critical of Redbeard's marksmanship.

<sup>126</sup> Conversation with Phil Nearing, 4 April 1993.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid. In strictly not for attribution conversations with Ásatrúers, it is apparent that some adherents do have Jewish family members, while the kindred headed by current Ring

The determination to make a stand on the race issue at Althing 9 appears to have been implicit in the aftermath of Althing 8, but it may have crystalized during the Old Northwest Kindred's stay in Murray's house. In conversation, Murray appears to have made an anti-Semitic remark to which Enslin took exception. Although he said nothing at the time, that ended his relationship with Murray.<sup>128</sup> However, while Althing 8 and Murray's occasional tendency to speak faster than he thinks provides the context for Northwest's actions, the precipitating cause was the presence of the eccentric leader of the New York/New Jersey based Ocean Kindred, Paal-Erik Filssennu. Filssennu's primary claim to fame is his quixotic quest to reclaim Greenland as something of an ethnic homeland, his invention of a language for this putative mini-state (contemptuously referred to by some as mock-Icelandic), and for his leadership of the National Socialist oriented Amerist Folk Bund.<sup>129</sup> At Althing 9, Filssennu set up a table next to Old Northwest's campsite containing literature from his Amerist Folk Bund, in which Enslin (Bagelwolf) took an immediate interest. So much so, in fact, that he pulled up a lawn chair, took each of the many pieces of literature, one at a time, read it thoroughly, and quietly tossed the item back on the table and taking the next item for inspection. It was in the course of this meditation on Folk Bundism that Enslin noticed that the flag of the future Amerist Folk Republic was in fact flying over the central 'sacred space' of the campground--the very area where blots and sumbels were held, and where oaths were sworn and the gods propitiated.

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of Troth Steerswoman, Prudence Priest, contains one Jewish convert to Ásatrú, memorably named Thor Bernstein. Conversation with Prudence Priest, 22 November 1992. Cf. *Yggdrasil* 9:3 (Freyfaxi 1992), p. 1.

<sup>128</sup> Conversation with Phil Nearing, 4 April 1993.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.; Conversation with William Bainbridge, 3 April 1993; and Conversation with Robert Stine, 4 April 1993. In something of a remarkable *volte face*, This same Filssennu who in 1989 would posit a strong racist stand as the key to Ásatrú's survival, would only two years later decry the entry of Identity and other far rightists into Odinism, which purged of its most virulently racist elements, should be reunited with Ásatrú! See "Ocean kindred of New York News," *Vor Trú* 35 (Yule 2239/1989), p.28; and "Letters," *Vor Trú* 39 (Winter 2241/1991), pp. 26-27.

Clearly in his view, the banner was being used as a political symbol, and as such, was in clear violation of the By-Laws forbidding political stands by the organization.<sup>130</sup> It had to come down immediately, and Enslin had little difficulty in winning the Old Northwest Kindred to this position.<sup>131</sup>

Complicating the matter was Mike Murray's insistence that the flag was his personal banner, and under it a member of Old Northwest had once sworn a warrior's oath of eternal troth to Murray when both were members of the Warrior's Gild.<sup>132</sup> The Old Northwest demand that the flag be lowered was thus not only a shock, but in Murray's eyes, an act of ultimate betrayal. There was, in the memory of all participants interviewed for this research, a strong belief that at the time, violence appeared to be a likely outcome of the confrontation. Although no Ásatrú gathering has ever resulted in violence, the combination of emotional argument, large amounts of alcohol, and the presence of guns at these events always offers the possibility of, at minimum, an unfortunate accident. And if any Ásatrú event had the possibility of such an eventuality, it was this one.

With this possibility in mind, the Old Northwest Kindred formulated a plan by which, if a battle ensued, they would be ready. Armed with a single 9mm pistol and an assortment of edged weapons, the original plan assigned each member a designated target (with Mike Murray being the first to go), and having neutralized the primary targets, called for the "Brewer" and Phil Nearing to retreat to the car with Stine and Enslin to provide

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<sup>130</sup> Conversation with Robert Stine, 4 April 1993.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid. It is clear that there were variations of opinion within the Kindred over tactics, if not the moral imperative of removing the banner. Nearing, counting on his election as Thingspeaker was, in retrospect, more conciliatory than he now feels he should have been, while the head of the Brewers Gild (considered by some in the Arizona Kindred as the guiding light of the affair), was most anxious for battle. Robert Stine, typically, seems to have held his own council, but in the event, was perhaps the most effective member of the Kindred in what followed. Conversation with Phil Nearing, 4 April 1993. Conversation with William Bainbridge, 3 April 1993.

<sup>132</sup> Conversation with William Bainbridge, 3 April 1993. It is important to note that the flag itself was not the same as the Warrior Gild flag.

cover for their retreat. The point appears to have been to assure that when the authorities were apprized of the battle, at least the Old Northwest version of events would be available to counter that of what, at the time, they believed would be a united front put up by the Arizona Kindred and its supporters.<sup>133</sup> Nearing however, a martial arts teacher of the *Wing Chun* school, wouldn't hear of leaving. The Brewer's respiratory problems made him an obvious choice to go, but the loss of the kindred's best fighter made little sense. Thus, Enslin was chosen to replace Nearing in the car, leaving Stine and Nearing to fight a rear-guard action to allow for their escape.<sup>134</sup>

In the end, following hours of emotional but non-violent debate, Murray's position that the banner was his personal, and thus apolitical, symbol did not prevail.<sup>135</sup> Indeed, in a most unViking act, Murray left the argument in defeat with several mead horns in tow, and sat and wept under his doomed banner. The Old Northwest carried the day, Phil Nearing was elected Thingspeaker as planned, and Althing 10 was planned for the Ohio home of Robert Stine. But the cost was high. Old Northwest determined that, after Althing 10, they would leave the Alliance, and now evince some disgust that they had not done so earlier. Both the Brewer and Scott Enslin have left active participation in organized Ásatrú, the former trying at this writing to return to academia, the latter a merchant seaman.<sup>136</sup> The Alliance soon returned to what it always was, a group which is very much an extension of Mike Murray and the Arizona Kindred, with a majority of racist

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<sup>133</sup> In the event, the Arizona Kindred were by no means the monolith that Old Northwest had expected. It was arguably the wide spectrum of opinion within Arizona Kindred ranks which was a key to diffusing the situation. Indeed, in the end, William Bainbridge opened negotiations aimed at a compromise with Old Northwest. Conversation with Robert Stine, 4 April 1993. Bainbridge's legalistic diplomacy, technicalities and all, is captured on the cassette recording of Althing 9, June 1989.

<sup>134</sup> Conversation with Robert Stine, 4 April 1993.

<sup>135</sup> Cassette recording of Althing 9, June 1989.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid., Conversation with Phil Nearing, 4 April 1993.

kindreds,<sup>137</sup> but with an increased determination to keep the Alliance on a non-political footing.<sup>138</sup>

Althing 10 was held without incident in Ohio, and it returned to the pattern of previous events. Religious ceremonies, contests, and ritual drinking and boasting, with the Council Meeting most notable for inconsequential discussions. A good part of the credit for diffusing the lingering tensions from Althing 9 may be credited to Robert Stine who as host elected to move the event grounds from the usual easily accessible public park to a beautiful lake shore in a distant, hidden valley whose primary attraction beyond the scenery was the utter impossibility of getting in or out without a local guide. It is perhaps unremarkable that, being thrust into an area which, in Bob Stine's words was like returning to the tenth century, served to focus the collective mind on cooperative and non-confrontational pursuits!<sup>139</sup>

This was the last appearance of the Old Northwest Kindred at an Althing. Within months of the end of Althing 10, Old Northwest had resigned from the Alliance, and not long after that, following an ill-starred attempt to expand the kindred on the local level by, among other things, bringing in more women, both Nearing and Stine withdrew from group. They remained largely inactive in organized Ásatrú until the formation of the Ásatrú Fellowship, a small, highly unorthodox, all male group who get together three or four

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<sup>137</sup> Conversation with Robert Stine, 4 April 1993; Interview with William Bainbridge, 24 January 1993. Another attempt, considered above, was made to turn the Alliance away from racialism at Althing 12 in 1992 by Gamlinginn. Gamlinginn, "Speech at Althing 12 of the Ásatrú Alliance (22-24 May 1992)," *Mountain Thunder* 5 (1992), pp. 4-5. This seems to have had no visible effect.

<sup>138</sup> One significant change which did take place with the AA in the wake of Althing 9 was the adoption of a new addition to the By-Laws: "All major additions or changes to the Alliance By-Laws should when possible be submitted in advance to each Kindred, either in writing or by phone." No more surprises, please! "By-Laws of the Ásatrú Alliance As Approved at Althing-July 6, 2241 Runic Era [1991]," *Vor Trú* 41 (Summer 2241/1991), p. 24.

<sup>139</sup> Conversation with Robert Stine, 4 April 1993.

times a year and whose publication, *Ask and Embla* (named for the first man and woman in Norse mythology) has just been issued.<sup>140</sup>

### The Ring of Troth

Very much the brainchild of Edred Thorsson, the Ring of Troth emerged on 20 December 1987, almost contemporaneously with the Ásatrú Alliance, from the wreckage of the Ásatrú Free Assembly.<sup>141</sup> Thorsson had previously established a specialized organization, the Rune Gild, in January 1980. The Gild today functions primarily through the mails to spread knowledge of the religious, magical and divinatory aspects of the Futhark, or runic alphabets, although before the creation of the Ring of Troth, it held meetings in Austin, Texas, during which lore and magical practices were discussed. The primary difference between the two organizations according to James Chisholm, the former Steersman of the Ring of Troth and a member of the Rune Gild from 1985, is that the Rune Gild is an expressly magical and initiatory organization while the Ring of Troth is not primarily magical in nature.<sup>142</sup>

While for reasons of his own, Thorsson is somewhat cautious today about taking too much credit (or responsibility) for the Ring of Troth, it was Thorsson who most clearly saw the need for an organization to take up the fallen standard of the AFA, but at the same time, to learn from Steve McNallen's mistakes:

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<sup>140</sup> Ibid. In something of a parody of *Vor Trú's* open forum policy, *Ask and Embla* assures readers that no opinion which does not accord with its own will be published. That opinion is stridently anti-racialist and purposely crafted to arouse maximum irritation in Alliance circles.

<sup>141</sup> Interview with Edred Thorsson, 20 September 1992.

<sup>142</sup> Interview with James Chisholm, 17 November 1992.



...on Mother Night,<sup>143</sup> December 20, 1987<sup>ce</sup> [I] founded together with James A. Chisholm the Ring of Troth.<sup>144</sup> Different from the AFA, the RoT was never a "one man show." I was *never* the leader of the organization--I was its Father but have always been apart from the actual running of the organization. (This is why my supposed "ouster" from the RoT makes no sense.) I never wanted to be the leader of a religious group within the greater Troth,<sup>145</sup> although between the years of 1988 and 1992 much of my personal effort was directed toward steering the newly raised ship of Troth.<sup>146</sup>

While it can be argued with some justice that no organization fathered by so mercurial a figure as Edred Thorsson could be expected to function smoothly, the path of the Ring of Troth has been particularly difficult.<sup>147</sup> In theory however, the Ring of Troth as originally posited did fill a much needed space in the Ásatrú community in that it

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<sup>143</sup> Mother Night refers to the first of the twelve nights of the Yule celebration. For the meaning and ritual content of the holiday, see the forthcoming KveldúlfR Gundarsson, *Teutonic Religion*.

<sup>144</sup> The ceremony itself was a simple one. Only Thorsson and Chisholm were present at the ceremonial site, a stone alter behind Thorsson's house in Austin. Thorsson 'invested' Chisholm with the Steersmanship of the RoT by transferring to him with "appropriate words" several symbols of the foundation of the religion: a Thor's hammer which Thorsson had worn to the first Ásatrú Free Assembly Althing in 1979, a stone from the Assembly Rock in Iceland, and a twig from an ash tree taken from the site of the last functioning temple of the Old religion at Uppsala, Sweden. This ended with "the declaration that the Ring of Troth was hereby founded with the aim of reestablishing the ancestral faith of the Germanic peoples." Interview with Edred Thorsson, 15 April 1993.

<sup>145</sup> This is a point upon which Thorsson is adamant. He felt that as the movement's only widely published author at the time, and as one of its best known figures, he felt the need to avoid at all costs the formation of a cult of personality centered on a single charismatic leader. The Temple of Set embroglio demonstrated the wisdom of such a course in graphic terms. Interview with Edred Thorsson, 15 April 1993.

<sup>146</sup> Interview with Edred Thorsson, 20 September 1992.

<sup>147</sup> Interview with KveldúlfR Gundarsson, January 1993. Gundarsson notes that in addition to the controversies which dogged Edred Thorsson and James Chisholm: "The two of them were also not best-suited to running a large-scale organization- I continually got letters from Llewellyn beginning, 'I wrote to the Ring of Troth and they never answered me...' The combination of their image problem and lack of organizational skills eventually made it very clear that the Ring was about to founder unless leadership was changed very quickly."

suggested possibilities far beyond what the Ásatrú Free Assembly or the Ásatrú Alliance could have hoped to create; that is, a functioning religious institution upon which the reconstruction of the Norse/Germanic religious heritage could be accomplished in a relatively short time and fully within the exigencies of modernity.<sup>148</sup> To do this, the RoT would focus its primary energy on the formation of individuals rather than the kindreds--groups--which are the passion of Mike Murray and the Ásatrú Alliance.<sup>149</sup>

The Ring of Troth's emergence was bitterly resented in some Ásatrú Alliance quarters, both as a rival for membership and influence and, of greater import, as a manifestation of the all too apparent fact that the divisive pressures which sundered the AFA would not soon be breached by its successor organizations. At the time of Althing 9 in 1989, Murray's resentment against the Ring of Troth boiled over in *Vor Trú*, and the tenor of Murray's diatribe provides a telling illustration of the gulf which separates the Alliance from the Ring of Troth. In a single emotional outburst, Murray speaks from his heart rather than from his office as Thingspeaker of the Alliance, and what emerges is a classic rendition of grievances, manichaeian suspicions and paranoid fears which are the common coin of the literature of the 'White supremacist constellation'. For here is a call to arms--issued (as is the custom in this milieu) in the name of an organization which has never committed an act of violence, and a call for racial survival which could have been taken from the pages of the *Turner Diaries*, save that the Alliance and the same Mike

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<sup>148</sup> Or indeed, post-modernity, for as Edred Thorsson would have it, the "Troth is on the vanguard of that cultural movement." Interview with Edred Thorsson, 20 September 1992.

<sup>149</sup> How emotional Mike Murray can become on the primary importance of kindreds and the accessibility of kindred affiliation to all potential Ásatrúers, regardless of how distant they are geographically from established groups, is demonstrated on a cassette recording of deliberations at Althing 9 in 1989, in which Murray launches into an emotional harangue on the subject in the course of discussion of an otherwise innocuous by-law concerning the AA membership requirements for independents. The Arizona Kindred, he states, has members throughout the country so that no one would be precluded from membership in the Ásatrú community simply because s/he lacks a nearby established kindred.

Murray who authored these words rejected in strong terms the criticism of Mike Merritt of the New Dawn which urged the Ásatrú community to take just such a stand as this! It is probably that Murray, as he had done so often when under stress, reacted with an emotional outburst that he later came to regret. As a graphic picture of the polar opposition represented by the Ásatrú Alliance and the Ring of Troth however, an examination of the organizational structure of the RoT could have no better introduction:

...They rage at us because in their stupidity they feel that Ásatrú should be the religion of a chosen cult of 'thinkers and solitary priests', they call us rabble because we accept ALL worthy men and women of the Folk into our fold. Not just philosophers with Phd [sic] behind their name. They talk in holy platitudes of 500 year cycles, doing nothing for the Folk today. Do they honestly think that our children will still be around in 500 years if we fail to act today? Wake up! We're headed for extinction in a hurry! And the Holy Faith of Ásatrú is the only thing that can halt this rapid slide into genetic oblivion. We are in a very real war for survival. Wars aren't fought by philosophers, they're fought by men and women of conviction and courage...People who would talk to all who would listen about our Holy Mission. People that work every day, day in day out for the Folk. People who openly stand up to the system and defy it for the christian<sup>150</sup> dominated whore it is. A system that would grind us up and cremate the remains if they could get away with it.<sup>151</sup>

The organizational blueprint for the RoT was set out in Thorsson's *A Book of Troth*, which "is the official, basic document of the organization known simply as 'The Ring of Troth'."<sup>152</sup> The organizational plan outlined for the Ring of Troth was as audacious as the conception of reconstructing the Northern Way in the modern world almost overnight; so much so that it is difficult to understand at this remove how Thorsson

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<sup>150</sup> Murray here follows the common Odinist/Ásatrú convention of spelling Christian with a lower case 'c'.

<sup>151</sup> Mike Murray, "The State of the Alliance Part Three," *Vor Trú* 33 (Midyear/Summer 2239/1989) p. 20.

<sup>152</sup> Edred Thorsson, *A Book of Troth*, p. xii.

could have overlooked (or simply ignored) its obvious contradictions. To illustrate the current straights of the Ring of Troth then, it is useful to explore the elaborate theoretical structure outlined in *A Book of Troth*, and to compare this with the somewhat less grandiose reality at the RoT's headquarters in Austin.

*A Book of Troth* provides the organizational framework for the Ring of Troth which is in all essentials followed to this day. At the apex of the organization sits the High Rede, which Thorsson describes as the "board of directors" for the organization.<sup>153</sup> The High Rede was to take responsibility for three major tasks: 1) creation of a training curriculum for Elders of the Troth, 2) ordination of Elders of the Troth, and 3) the licensing of the Elders of the Troth (empowering them to set up a hof or 'church').<sup>154</sup> In other words, the High Rede was conceived as essentially an ecclesiastical bureaucracy (as loathe as Ásatrúers would be to employ a terminology so colored by Christian concepts). These Troth Elders, under the direction of the High Rede would continue an ongoing course of study and training and the High Rede would record their spiritual and magical progress as well as their ethical standards, all of which would be a matter of public record. "In short, the Ring of Troth exists to re-establish a true 'priesthood' within our folk."<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>153</sup> Ibid., p. 203. *A Book of Troth* was published in 1989, a full three years before Timothy Miller's collection on the post-charismatic phase of New Religions in which Gordon Melton made exactly this observation: that those new religious movements which thrive after the founder's death are those in which the original charismatic visionary during his or her lifetime had the foresight to transfer effective authority over the day to day affairs of the movement to a board of directors modeled on the governing board of a corporation. J. Gordon Melton, "Introduction: When Prophets Die: The Succession Crisis in New Religions," in Timothy Miller, ed., *When Prophets Die: The Postcharismatic Fate of New Religious Movements*, p. 10.

<sup>154</sup> Edred Thorsson, *A Book of Troth*, p. 204.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid. Thorsson goes on to brush aside counter-arguments that the historical record gives at best ambiguous support to the notion that the pre-Christian tradition actually boasted a professional priesthood with the logical argument that such a cadre of religious professionals are needed now to reawaken the tradition in the modern (or post-modern) world.

Thorsson's conception of a High Rede providing the training to an embryonic cadre of priests and priestesses (godhi and gydhja respectively) is brilliant, save for one practical flaw: Where in this day and age can a ready made Council of Elders be found who would be learned and respected enough to take charge of a program of priestly training (and licensing), and for that matter, where would the novices be found who would undertake this arduous (and poorly remunerated) spiritual path? Indeed, given the small size and broad geographic dispersion of the Ásatrú community, where would these eager young religious be sent (and supported on the local level, according to the Ring of Troth's vision)?<sup>156</sup>

The answer to all three of these questions is the same--it could not be done. It was simply not possible to create a circle of qualified Elders, a capable and motivated core of novices, or, indeed, a self supporting 'mission field' by an act of administrative fiat.<sup>157</sup> Thus, from the beginning the High Rede simply could not produce the mandated group of Troth Elders. Only Thorsson could have qualified from the organization's inception, and currently, KveldúlfR Gundarsson meets the rigorous Eldership standards.<sup>158</sup> Others were

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<sup>156</sup> If all of this recalls the earliest days of Christianity in which the Apostles scattered to preach and write and cajole the tiny Christian communities into a spiritual force which would be destined to wrest to itself the mantle of empire, one perhaps could get a glimpse of Edred Thorsson's true model for the Ring of Troth--i.e., the early Church! Such a vision would be very much in keeping with his own view of Christianity, and would do much to explain his seemingly incongruous attraction to the dualistic Christian concept of Satanism as well. Indeed, confronted with this question directly, Thorsson has no hesitation in claiming that the early Church is indeed an attractive model for the fledgling Troth. The key point is that the Christian model worked, and while it would be desirable to have the tradition passed from father to son as it was before Christianity, the lack of knowledge of the Old Ways in families now necessitates an ecclesiastical structure. The situation facing Ásatrú's current endeavor to paganize the Folk is precisely analogous to Christianity's task in the pagan era of evangelizing the Folk. Interview with Edred Thorsson, 15 April 1993.

<sup>157</sup> The Rune-Gild in fact suffers from many of the administrative difficulties that would plague the Ring of Troth. It "never existed as a coherent organization and titles were bestowed more or less on whim." Interview with KveldúlfR Gundarsson, January 1993.

<sup>158</sup> Thorsson today asserts that the High Rede was never intended to be composed exclusively of Troth Elders, but rather, of the functional equivalent of ecclesiastical bureaucrats. Interview with Edred Thorsson, 15 April 1993. While this may be feasible in

appointed in recognition of their work for the Troth, and others for reasons known only to Thorsson. The condition of the Elder Training Program, a task which soon fell to KveldúlfR Gundarsson, has not fared greatly better.<sup>159</sup> There simply is not, as of yet, a cadre of Ásatrúers with the time and scholarly inclination necessary to undertake a rigorous program of study.<sup>160</sup> Gundarsson has agonized over the problem, and the Elder Training Program has been amended on several occasions. It is nonetheless demanding, and it reads much like a university curriculum which it frankly admits that it aspires to be. Term papers are required, as are tests of ritual competence. University courses may be substituted for some Elder Training Requirements. To fully understand the scope of the Ring of Troth's ambition, it is useful to set out the program in full. The course is divided into Needful Studies (required courses) and Chosen Studies (electives of which a minimum of nine is required). It is important to note however, that the practical realities of the present day (i.e., politics) are reflected in the Elder Training Program under Gundarsson just as they were under Thorsson and Chisholm.<sup>161</sup> Be this as it may, the curriculum is as follows:

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an established institution (as, say, the medieval Church), how a group such as this could carry out the function of overseeing a cadre of Elders and Elders-in-training without the latter rejecting their authority is hard to envision.

<sup>159</sup> Indeed, in his forthcoming book, *Teutonic Religion*, Gundarsson, the Lore Warden and Master of the Elder Training Program for the Ring of Troth, makes the incredible statement: "At present, no real 'training program' has been created for godwo/men, nor is there any sort of certification or initiatory program such as exists in other religions." Not exactly a ringing vote of confidence! Privately, Gundarsson notes that there are 21 persons currently enrolled in the program, of whom 4 are women. However, he has only certified one as an Elder, and this certification was provisional so that the individual could have a title with which to pursue essentially political and public relations tasks. Although Gundarsson takes care not to name this individual, the reference is clearly to Gert McQueen. Letter from KveldúlfR Gundarsson, 14 April 1993.

<sup>160</sup> Interview with KveldúlfR Gundarsson, January 1993.

<sup>161</sup> "In very exceptional cases when someone has shown great leadership or teaching abilities or done great deeds for the Troth, it is possible for him/her to be recognized as an Elder without yet having fulfilled all the needful studies, though she/he will still bear the responsibility for bringing her/himself up to standard." Ring of Troth, "Elder Training Programme." n.d. Gundarsson notes one current member of the High Rede in particular is deficient in this lore, although this person has enrolled in the Training program. Interview with KveldúlfR Gundarsson, January 1993. In conversation with current RoT

**Needful Studies****I. Academic Studies**

1. Norse Mythology
2. Common Germanic Mythology

*Historical Studies*

1. Early Germanic History (before 300 C.E.)
2. Migration Age History (300-700 C.E.)
3. Viking Age History (700-1100 c.e.)
4. Teutonic Revival History (1100 C.E.-today)

*Cultural Studies*

1. Teutonic Culture
2. Indo-European Culture and Religion
3. General Survey of World Cultural History
4. Heroic Legends
5. Major Sagas
6. Folklore
7. Modern Conceptions and Misconceptions

*Theoretical Studies*

1. Methodologies and Critical Theory
2. Theological and Philosophical Principles
3. Basic Principles of Ritual, Mythology, and Religion
4. An Historical and Philosophical Evaluation of Christianity

**II. Working Studies**

1. Blessing Work
2. Hearth/Garth Organization
3. Education Work Outside the Troth

**Chosen Studies****I. Academic Studies***Linguistic Studies-at least for a reading knowledge, listed in rough order of priority*

Modern German (not absolutely needful, but not having at least a reading knowledge of it is a crippling lack in Germanic studies)

Old Norse

Old English

Modern Scandinavian Dialects

Germanic Philology

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Steerswoman Prudence Priest (who strikes many as something of a jolly, and immensely likable, Wiccan), it was made clear that this Elder for one has no intention of embarking on the tortuous path of academic training, especially where that training concerns learning German (a course of study upon which Gundarsson has been especially insistent).  
Conversation with Prudence Priest, 22 November 1992.

*Communications Studies*

Rhetoric  
Public Relations  
Adult Education  
Children's Education

*Fellow Folks' Studies*

Celtic Myth and Religion  
Celtic History and Culture  
Finnish Studies  
Lappish Studies  
Steppes Folks' Studies

## II. Working Studies

*Religious Workings*

Household  
Site Construction

*Traditional Skills*

Performance Arts  
Word-Skills  
Warrior-Skills  
Traditional Dance  
Traditional Games

*Traditional Crafts*

Brewing  
Woodworking  
Spinning/Weaving  
Traditional Design & Ornamentation  
Metalworking  
and anything else that seems to fit here

*Magical Studies*

Runic Divination  
Runic Working  
Charm Spells and Folk Magic  
Shamanic Theory  
Seithr Working  
Spae-Working<sup>162</sup>

With so demanding a program expected of Troth Elders, and with the dearth of members of the High Rede who are remotely qualified to assume the title of Elder which is based on these criteria, it is little wonder that the High Rede of the Ring of Troth has been

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<sup>162</sup> Ring of Troth, "Elder Training Programme." n.d.



from its inception a fractious group. This was of less concern when the core of the Ring of Troth were centered in a closely knit group of friends in Texas. There, the core group consisted of James Chisholm as Steersman, Dianne Ross as editor of *Idunna* (and nearly every other imaginable administrative task),<sup>163</sup> John Gyori, and eventually KveldúlfR Gundarsson.<sup>164</sup> Edred Thorsson was never far from the action, but he claimed no official role in the RoT beyond paternity.<sup>165</sup> When this group expanded however, a delicate situation became untenable, with problems arising from two directions: Edred Thorsson's increasingly public explorations of the dark side and the increasing gap between the organization's ambitions and its less grandiose realities. These strands of history flow together, but before leaving the subject of the High Rede, a postscript is in order.

As originally envisioned in *A Book of Troth*, the High Rede was to have eight sitting members plus a ninth member who would coordinate and lead the Rede.<sup>166</sup> Currently, there are eight members including Steerswoman Prudence Priest. Of these, only four are Elders of the Troth, KveldúlfR Gundarsson, Gert Æscbeam McQueen, Prudence Priest, and Dianne Luark Ross.<sup>167</sup> And of these Elders, only Gundarsson meets the requirements for Eldership, while the other three, generously, have some work to do.<sup>168</sup> It is small wonder then, that in private conversations with various members of the High

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<sup>163</sup> Dianne Ross lived at the time in San Antonio, Texas, putting in 8 or more hours a day, 5 days a week, handling RoT administrative duties, and driving in to Austin for magical and ceremonial workings once or twice per week. Interview with James Chisholm, 17 November 1992.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Or, as he reflects today, his role in the RoT was analogous to that of God and the universe, as conceptualized by a Deist. Interview with Edred Thorsson, 15 April 1993.

<sup>166</sup> Edred Thorsson, *A Book of Troth*, p. 205.

<sup>167</sup> Interview with DjúpkerkR, 14 October 1992.

<sup>168</sup> This is a consensus view among all whom I have interviewed for this research, including several speaking about themselves.

Rede, with others in the Ring of Troth, and in fact, with a number of independent Ásatrúers, there is scarcely a kind word to be heard about the High Rede as a group, and very few encouraging words to be heard of the Rede members as individuals.<sup>169</sup>

However, lest the reader be left with a totally negative portrait of the Elder Training Program, and indeed, of the High Rede, the ever diplomatic William Bainbridge, himself a member of the High Rede since 1992 (an Edred Thorsson choice), should be accorded the last word on the subject. Noting that the Eldership Training Program has been under Gundarsson's full control only since March, 1992, "it is simply unreasonable to expect to see concrete results at the present time."<sup>170</sup> More,

It is important to realize that the Troth as it is now constituted began in March, 1992. Since that time, it has constructed a collective leadership, the first in modern North American Ásatrú, diversified authority and administration, and put the framework in place for the priesthood training program. With these foundations, it should be possible to develop a truly competent priesthood over the next few years, and to begin expanding local and regional activities, while avoiding many of the pitfalls of previous groups. Without such preparation, however, sustained, directed and meaningful growth would be difficult, if not impossible.<sup>171</sup>

Bainbridge makes a key point in his analysis of the Ring of Troth when he stresses the contention that the RoT has existed in its current form only since March 1992. Until

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<sup>169</sup> KveldúlfR Gundarsson is the sole exception to these remarkably poisonous relations. While all agree that Gundarsson is yet very young, he appears to be the hope of the RoT's future in everyone's eyes. It is also of some benefit to Gundarsson that he spends a great deal of his time abroad and thus, despite the wonders of E-mail, at some remove from the conflicts which rend the High Rede.

<sup>170</sup> Interview with William Bainbridge, 24 January 1993.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid. It is important to note that what makes a widely scattered collective leadership possible is communications technology--in the case of many on the High Rede (and any others who may wish to tune in), computers and E-mail are the glue which binds most of the High Rede together. Significantly, Steerswoman Prudence Priest is not part of the E-mail network, as she finds computers distasteful. Conversation with Prudence Priest, 22 November 1992.

then, the organization, like the ambitious Elder Training Program, was in chaos, buffeted on all sides with controversies of its own making. Specifically, three (probably) unrelated revelations swept through the Ásatrú community in the first year of the RoT's existence: Edred Thorsson's (and later, James Chisholm's) connection to the Temple of Set, the same cast of characters' involvement in sadomasochistic activity, and finally, the case of Rob Meek, a rising star of the RoT who exposed in particularly lurid terms Thorsson's Temple of Set activities. Meek, as the controversy over the Temple of Set was reaching its peak, was arrested in Dallas, Texas, accused and later convicted of the murder of his wife. Given this triple shock, it is a testament to the viability of the Ring of Troth (or to the protection of the gods) that the organization survived at all.

Edred Thorsson's connection to the Temple of Set, and the principles of his Order of the Trapezoid, were set out above. What concerns us here is the dissemination of this news to the Ásatrú community, and the intensely negative reaction which this revelation engendered. Thorsson argues, with considerable justification, that his connection with Satanism, and with both the Church of Satan and the Temple of Set was known to many within the Ásatrú community. However, there is considerably less documentation for Thorsson's belief that McNallen (or any other Ásatrú figure) understood the left hand path that he had chosen, much less that McNallen approved of it.<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> A letter from McNallen to Thorsson, dated 20 January 1987, contains the last line: "Thanks also for the Temple of Set information!" This acknowledgement does prove that McNallen was aware of the ToS connection in 1986, but it falls well short of approval. As we have seen, McNallen's leadership style precluded his intervening in Thorsson's activities in any way. In retrospect however, he does not share Thorsson's sanguine recollections of the subject:

Edred seems to have had much more diverse than most of us in the movement thought! As I recall, all this burst on Ásatrú after the demise of the AFA. I took no position on it though I feel that Ásatrú and Satanism are incompatible belief systems for one person to hold, just as Ásatrú and Christianity would also be incompatible. I suspect that the vast majority of Asafolk would agree.

Interview with Stephen McNallen, 4 January 1993.

The sources interviewed for this research are unanimous in their recollection that Rob Meek was in fact the one who went to considerable lengths to publicize the 'Satanist infiltration' of Ásatrú. Meek seems to have been motivated by "repeated viewings of Geraldo's Satanism specials."<sup>173</sup> Meek apparently learned about Thorsson's Temple of Set affiliation through a young female Setian who boasted at a Dallas occult bookstore of knowing Edred Thorsson through her connection with the ToS. The local occult community being as small and interconnected as it is, it took little time for this news to get to Rob Meek. According to Edred Thorsson's recollection, Meek had held a grudge for some time because Thorsson had not deigned to communicate with Meek as his star was rising with the Ring of Troth. Add to this that in the course of the Temple of Set controversy when four or five letters were exchanged between the two, Thorsson apparently refused to rise to Meek's support of the Vanir against the Æsir, and the break was irreparable.<sup>174</sup>

Perhaps the most dispassionate,<sup>175</sup> and thus enlightening 'insider' view of this period, is provided by KveldúlfR Gundarsson:

The whistle was blown on Edred Thorsson by Rob Meek late in 1988; Meek campaigned ceaselessly throughout Ásatrú to

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<sup>173</sup> Interview with James Chisholm, 17 November, 1992. The impact of this series on various aspects of the 'Satanism Scare' is discussed in Chapter 6.

<sup>174</sup> Interview with Edred Thorsson, 15 April 1993. Thorsson in fact felt that with a renewal of hostilities between the Vanes and the Æsir, all was right with the universe.

<sup>175</sup> Others recall the impact of the revelation to have been considerably more immediate--and seismic--than Gundarsson recalls. One well placed adherent remembers for example: "The news spread like wildfire throughout the Astarú community, which reacted with horror and a deep sense of betrayal." Interview with DjúpkerkR, 14 October 1992. It was too much as well even for the cautious William Bainbridge who, having examined documents from the Temple of Set and the Order of the Trapezoid and having discovered Thorsson's name and post office box on them, wrote a letter of resignation to the Rune Guild, "opposing in my letter of resignation to Thorsson any identification of Odin with the 'prince of darkness,' and any connection between Ásatrú and Satanism." Interview with William Bainbridge, 24 January 1993.

make sure everyone knew about the Temple of Set. Edred's mention of Aquino in *Runelore* and *A Book of Troth* proved it beyond a doubt.<sup>176</sup> In late spring of 1989, James Chisholm also admitted his membership in the ToS. By this time, the issue had seriously inflamed what I believe (though not having been active in the early years, do not know) to have been a long standing degree of dislike between Thorsson and some members of the AA [Ásatrú Alliance].<sup>177</sup> Edred and Jim then wrote very stupid letters to the 1989 Althing--Edred identifying Wotan/Odhinn with the "Prince of Darkness"<sup>178</sup> and Jim challenging them to "measure sax against the gandr"<sup>179</sup>--which sealed their status as outcasts in Ásatrú as a whole and established a perception of the Ring of Troth as merely a sort of outer court of the Temple of Set. This badly damaged the group's growth potential for a couple of years; however it [the RoT]

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<sup>176</sup> Thorsson did indeed acknowledge Michael Aquino for having "helped me to put my Work in perspective." This quote however, is from the author's interview with Thorsson, 20 November 1992. Aquino's name was struck from the acknowledgement page of the second printing of *A Book of Troth* which appeared in 1992. Given this omission, Thorsson's stated reasons for having included Aquino in the original *A Book of Troth* take on added import: "[Aquino's] influence allowed me to see the need for the Work, the need for it to be pure and authentic, and how to make that authentic vision work in the world. For that all the little carpers ought to be thankful--but instead they choose only to fear. (Some Vikings they are!)" Interview with Edred Thorsson, 20 November 1992.

<sup>177</sup> Judging by the degree of vituperation which Thorsson received at Althing 9, Gundarsson if anything understates the case. At play too however, were rivalries between the two very young organizations with such radically different visions for the future of Ásatrú, each striving for the legitimacy which was the exclusive province of the Ásatrú Free Assembly.

<sup>178</sup> Edred Thorsson has kindly made his letter, addressed to the Arizona Kindred, available to this research. It is in fact a rather moderate attempt to explain his position, wrapped in salutations to the Althing and attacks on reactionary Christian forces bent on sullyng the reputation of the good Dr. Michael Aquino: "...the source of the problem--the dying force of the decrepit White-Krist...Michael A. Aquino is in full support of the Ásatrú movement and its aims in the world. This is also true of MANY others (some of your close acquaintance) who follow the Left-Hand Path. Don't reject your friends and kinsmen for the sake of your enemies." Thorsson then attempts yet again to explain his quest for the shamanic experience of the light and dark paths of Odin. "An Open Letter to Members of the Arizona Kindred From Edred Thorsson, Odhinsgodhi and Yrmin-Drighten," 30 May 1989. Interviewed on 20 September 1992, Thorsson denied that Aquino had any "interest in or knowledge of, the Ring of Troth..."

<sup>179</sup> Chisholm here is employing a subtle play on words that was in all probability lost on many of the delegates to Althing 9. A 'sax' in its original Old Norse sense indicated a bladed weapon used both for battle and for ritual sacrifice, while a 'gandr' is simply a magic object or tool, or by extension, any enchanted object. On the definitions, see Gamlinginn, *The Ordasafn of Gamlinginn*. Even today, it is Chisholm's letter more than Thorsson's which is seen as particularly objectionable. Interview with Phil Nearing, 9 April 1993.

was not very large when the event took place. Edred's ambiguous position was also something of a difficulty from the beginning: he had no desire to take a place, but kept writing and trying to structure the ideology of the group. He went through several titles, including "Drighten," before settling on "Warden of the Lore."<sup>180</sup>

Ultimately, Edred and Jim realized that, while they were involved in the Troth, it would never gain any sort of acceptance.  
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The reaction against Thorsson was indeed strong, and began with the reception of his and James Chisholm's letters at Althing 9. There, a statement was adopted declaring that there could be no connection between Ásatrú and Satanism. In particular, the Alliance went on record as opposing:

any connection between Ásatrú and the "prince of darkness or any other alien deities..[in particular with] outlandish ... Mediterranean archetypes, deities, philosophies and ideas into our pure faith...We shall have no part in any attempted rehabilitation of Nazi occultism<sup>182</sup> [because] the Nazis did more damage to our Folk and to Germanic spirituality in two decades than any group since our forced conversion to Christianity, and we shall never be fooled...into forgetting the unspeakable consequences for our Folk of the 'Thousand Year Reich'. Regarding Edred Thorsson, we recognize his unique and irreplaceable contribution to our rediscovery of our spiritual and magical heritage...because of the great respect we all felt for Thorsson and his work, we have been all the more hurt and dismayed to learn of his recent and extensive connection with Satanism...In secretly associating himself with satanic organizations, and insinuating satanic teachings into his

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<sup>180</sup> Cf. "Announcements," *Idunna* 2:1 (July 1989), p.51.

<sup>181</sup> Interview with KveldúlfR Gundarsson, January 1993.

<sup>182</sup> The 'rehabilitation of Nazi occultism' charge, carrying with it the implication that Thorsson subscribes in some way to subtly packaged National Socialist doctrine, is clearly a sore point with Thorsson. In an article which decries racialism as a "nineteenth century dualist construct," Thorsson fails to address the issue of how the Order of the Trapezoid (which goes unmentioned) can claim to have done precisely this. Edred Thorsson, "Who Will Build the Hearths of the Troth: Are Racial Considerations Appropriate?" *Idunna* 1:2 (July 1989), pp.16-24. Even today, Thorsson remains incredulous that Mike Murray of all people would criticize anyone on the basis of neo-Nazi ideology. Interview with Edred Thorsson, 15 April 1993.

work, particularly in the Rune Gild,<sup>183</sup> Edred has let us down, and if, as rumored, he has regarded us as sheep to be manipulated and led about without explaining the origin of his teachings or the direction of his leadership, then he has unforgivably insulted us as well. However, the Alliance has no intention of leading inquisitions or pronouncing anathemas. The All Father [Odin] has always been a stirrer of strife, and, as his children, we do not fear the free competition of ideas...<sup>184</sup>

Over the following year, the attack escalated in the pages of Ásatrú publications in the United States and England.<sup>185</sup> Predictably, Mike Murray and *Vor Trú* would be the most outspoken. Yet again in this controversy, Murray finds himself pushed into an uncomfortable middle position between Kim Peart's live and let live support for Thorsson's freedom to experiment with syncretic paths to the revival of the faith<sup>186</sup> and those like 'Kosto Banner' who would relentlessly expose, oppose, and if it were possible, exterminate Thorsson and those like him, for, "I have come to the end of my tolerance with

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<sup>183</sup> There is an important point to be made here; while Satanism did become entangled with the Rune Gild, Thorsson hardly made any secret of this. Featured prominently in the reading list of the Rune Gild is Anton Szandor LaVey's *The Satanic Bible*. The work is described as philosophically in tune with the "Odic viewpoint" (Thorsson offers a comparison to *Egil's Saga* as evidence for this assertion), and as a "more practical, pragmatic, and balanced [magical text]---especially from the viewpoint of the beginner--than most others on the [Rune Gild] list." "The Rune Guild Reading List," *Yggdrasil* 8:1 (1991), p. 3. Cf. Anton Szandor LaVey, *The Satanic Bible* (New York: Avon, 1969).

<sup>184</sup> Cassette recording of Althing 9, June 1989. The statement went on to condemn James Chisholm, but otherwise declined to become entangled in the chaotic situation that was then unfolding in Texas, or to take sides in the Rob Meek-Edred Thorsson feud.

<sup>185</sup> Thorsson considered the condemnation that was directed at him from the Odinic Rite in England particularly galling in that it was Thorsson's letter, written under the guise of the respectable academic, Stephen E. Flowers, of the Department of Germanic Languages at the University of Texas at Austin, which was instrumental in obtaining the Odinic Rite charitable status. See "Charitable Status for the Odinic Rite," and "Edred Thorsson: A Statement of the Court of Gothar of the Odinic Rite," *ORB* 73 (20 March 1988), pp. 1-4. Thorsson's reply, betraying a profound sense of hurt and a compensatory aura of pride, is found in; "Letter to the Circle of Gothar," 26 July 2239 [1989].

<sup>186</sup> Kim Peart, "Letters to Ed" *Vor Trú* 37 (Summer 2240/1990), pp.25-26.

Christian manipulators and their disgruntled offspring, the Satanists and the parasites of today's establishment and all other degenerate elements bent on the destruction of our race!"<sup>187</sup> Struck by the unremitting hostility towards the Ring of Troth in the letters arriving at *Vor Trú* for its Fall 1990 issue, William Bainbridge feels constrained in the course of helping to put the issue together to come to the defense of the organization and its leaders. He does so not only for the valuable scholarly work conducted in that organization and reflected in the pages of *Idunna*, the RoT's publication, and for the potential of the Elder Training Program (in truth, the most detested aspect of the RoT in Alliance circles), but of greater importance:

...insofar as I am aware, the Troth is neither satanic nor in any way sympathetic to nazism [sic]. It also seems not to be racist, which is far more to my taste than the Alliance's apparent ambivalence in that respect.<sup>188</sup>

More, ever the lawyer, Bainbridge suggests the sacralization of the American Constitution:

To my mind, the First Amendment represents one of the very greatest achievements of the English-speaking peoples, and contains at least as much of the wisdom of Odin and Tyr as anything that has ever appeared in an Ásatrú journal.<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>187</sup> Kosto Banner, "Letters to Editor," *Vor Trú* 38 (Fall 2240/1990), pp. 23-24. While far less vociferous than this piece, most letters, and Murray's replies, reflect hostility to Thorsson and the Ring of Troth. Cf. "Ocean Kindred of New York News," *Vor Trú* 35 (Yule 2239/1989), p.28; Caryl Young, "Letters to Editor," *Vor Trú* 35 (Yule 2239/1989), pp.29-30; Douglas Sunlin, "Letters to Editor," *Vor Trú* 35 (Yule 2239/1989), p.31; Murray's reasoned reply to a previous Kosto Banner letter, "Letters to Editor," *Vor Trú* 38 (Fall 2240/1990), pp. 22-23; and his sharper attack on the Ring of Troth in "Letters to Editor," *Vor Trú* 42 (Fall 2241/1991), p. 43.

<sup>188</sup> William Bainbridge, "Letter to Editor," *Vor Trú* 38 (Fall 2240/1990), pp. 24-25.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid.



Meanwhile, the Ring of Troth in Texas were hardly passive observers to all this. Fighting attacks from former Thorsson favorite Rob Meek on one front, and fending off attacks from the Alliance and other Ásatrú sources on the other, Dianne Ross, the ever loyal editor of *Idunna*, opened a line of defense in the form of a most unusual two page letter addressed individually to *Idunna* subscribers/Ring of Troth members which appears to be intended to compliment a year long campaign of defense and counter-attack conducted by the Thorsson/Chisholm axis. Thorsson's line of attack came in the form of open letters, none significantly different in content to the "Open Letter to the Arizona Kindred" which was read at Althing 9.<sup>190</sup> Ross' defense reflects a far more detached version of the RoT 'party line', and, as *Idunna* concentrated on its 'seminar paper' approach to the Troth and thus did not join in the battle of polemics with *Vor Trú* or the Odinnic Rite, the Ross letter will stand as the last word on the Satanism controversy:

While I am writing to you, it seems perhaps timely to touch briefly on the allegations made regarding possible "Satanic" influences on the Troth. I have been a member of the Ring of Troth for eight months and have attended meetings of the Irminsul Hearth [Thorsson's kindred] in Austin on a weekly basis. I have seen absolutely no "Satanic" influences within the Troth and certainly in no way is the Troth seen as a recruitment ground for the Temple of Set. (And I am not an unobservant sort.) I am not a member of the Temple.

Edred Thorsson and James Chisholm have been unbelievably kind and helpful in my quest to find my way back to the ancient Gods and Goddesses. They both spend between twenty and thirty hours a week in their dedication to this religion, in addition to their full time jobs. This, of course, is an understatement. Really, they have given all their adult lives. I have never seen them do anything to harm another living soul and they have always gone out of their way to teach and encourage. Certainly that has been my experience with other members of our

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<sup>190</sup> See for example, "An Open Letter to the Leadership of the Ásatrú/Odinist/Troth Movement by Stephen Edred Thorsson-Flowers, Ymir-Drighten of the Rune Gild, Grand Master of the Order of the Trapezoid, Magister Templi, Temple of Set, One of the Nine Unknowns," 28 February 1989. The Nine Unknowns are the governing board of the Temple of Set. It is hard to resist the temptation to point out that with Thorsson going public with his membership on the Board, there were eight Unknowns, and with Dr. Aquino, there were seven...

hearth as well. I would not have even known of any of this business if it had not been for Rob Meek in Arlington [Texas] and it seems to me that everything has been blown completely out of proportion. In the eyes of the Christians we are all Satanic. What Troth members do in their free time, in their private lives, as long as its legal, should be respected. It seems that there is so very much to be done and so few, relatively speaking, to do it, why is so much time and energy being devoted to damning those who have given so much? If we cannot be flexible enough to allow for an understanding of all of Odhinn's aspects and other explorations of a personal transformative nature, what will happen when the time comes to confront our real opponents when they come to understand our aim? I would not have found my way to this path were it not for [Thorsson's] *Runelore* and there are few that I meet who have **not** come to Ásatrú in these recent years by way of Thorsson's books. I personally feel I owe him a great deal.

I say all of this in hopes you will use your intelligence and influence to put an end to all this malfeasance. Please consider that just possibly the fires of discontent have been fueled by the tendencies of those who find it easier to criticize and damn than to spend the energy required for constructive long-term work on behalf of the folk. If Rob Meek would spend his time writing on the Vanic Gods and Goddesses and their mysteries we would all be the better for it. He despises Odhinn and is so frustrated that the good books written in recent times have all been by written by Odians. Rather than find out if he can produce a major writing of quality from a Vanic perspective it seems he finds a perverse satisfaction in causing strife and dissention. Each one of us in this religion is precious and we must try to understand and respect our differences.<sup>191</sup>

This letter is rich in allusions to several of the central religious tenets and motifs attendant to the current reconstruction of Ásatrú in the modern world, and Rob Meek's rebellion (or betrayal) is posited here as arising from this ethos. Whether this is true or not, the letter deserves some analytical attention--particularly in light of the tragic denouement to Rob Meek's story.

Most striking perhaps, is the assertion--correct in the view of fundamentalists--that Christians consider neo-pagans satanic in any case. Ásatrú, like Odinism, is an explicitly anti-Christian belief system. This may be expressed with varying degrees of intensity, ranging from the contemptuous "White-Krist" of Edred Thorsson to the simple refusal to

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<sup>191</sup> Letter from Dianne Luark Ross, 29 July 1989.

capitalize 'christian' in the work of KveldúlfR Gundarsson. However it is expressed, it is based on the belief that Christianity displaced the old religion and its native values, replacing it with an alien, Mediterranean cult which had the effect of devastating the culture of the Norse/Germanic peoples. It was in this view an historical disaster, the remediation of which is one of the central goals of Ásatrú today. Thus, the cryptic caution "what will happen when the time comes to confront our real opponents when they come to understand our aim?" This is seen by most Ásatrúers as inevitable, given the pronounced intolerance they see as inherent in Christianity. And as we have seen, many believe that Meek was induced to take this action by televised warnings of the machinations of Satan on this earth--hardly a prevalent view among neo-pagans, but an article of faith in fundamentalist Christianity (of which Arlington Texas is a heartland).

Yet while Christian 'intolerance' is seen as the context for Meek's actions, the proximate causes could well have been drawn from the Eddas themselves. None of the images in the last paragraph of Ross' letter are new to these pages; Odin as strife-stirrer, the war between the Vanes and Æsir, jealousy and revenge, all of these have been noted in various contexts throughout this chapter. Here, however, the themes are brought together and applied to a real life situation in the world of Ásatrú. Shortly after Meek's campaign against Satanic influences in the Troth however, he found himself facing other, more serious problems. It might be well then, to look briefly at Meek's career in Ásatrú, for it was with his fall that the Ring of Troth, at the height of the Satanism controversy which simply refused to abate, was faced with a second crisis--this one not of its own making.

Rob Meek came to Ásatrú in 1985 in the course of a spiritual quest which he undertook at the urging of his mother, then dying of lymphatic cancer in his native San Antonio, Texas. Born in 1963 into a religious Episcopalian family and educated in the local Christian School system from 1976-1979, Meek investigated Islam, Eastern religions and a number of other religious ports of call before finding his way to the then headquarters of the Ásatrú Free Alliance, the Northern European Heritage Center in Breckenridge,

Texas, manned by Steve McNallen and Robert Stine.<sup>192</sup> He adopted the AFA philosophy and returned to Arlington, Texas where he founded a small kindred that disbanded with the dissolution of the AFA.

In 1987 he married Anne Harrington, who was to become a force in Ásatrú as the founding editor of the journal *Northways*, a publication of such quality that in 1989 *Idunna* was slated to be relegated to the function of *Vor Trú*; a house organ of the Ring of Troth leaving *Northways* as the vehicle for the articles written by Ásatrú's academic elite. Coming into contact with Mike Murray and the Ásatrú Alliance in that year, Meek, now more commonly known by his magical name of Ingvar Solve Ingvisson, re-established a kindred in Arlington in 1988. Murray referred him to other ex-AFA'ers, including Carleen Volden in the suburbs of Houston. Volden at the time appears to have functioned as something of a clearinghouse for refugees from the AFA, and it was from her that Ingvisson learned about the Ring of Troth. He quickly joined the RoT, working his way within a year to membership on the initial High Reed, while returning to the University of Texas at Arlington to pursue a BA in General Studies.<sup>193</sup>

A literal dark shadow cast a pall over the career of Ingvisson/Meek, however. He had been diagnosed with a brain tumor, which in time would grow and, some recall, take on a kind of personality for Meek who gave it a name, would refer to it at times as a friend, and would on occasion converse with it. He was, in fact, becoming increasingly unstable, and his dramatic denunciation of Edred Thorsson for "Satanic activities" should in retrospect probably be seen as but another spiritual way station which would by some

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<sup>192</sup> Meek was at the time a member of the Society for Creative Anachronism, and this group had been invited by McNallen to put on a demonstration of medieval costumes and jousting for the Heritage Center's Grand Opening. Meek stayed on to learn more of the Nothern Way. Interview with Robert Stine, 1 April 1993.

<sup>193</sup> Rob Meek's biography was printed in *Idunna* before his fall from grace. He is held up as a model for all to emulate. See "Announcements," *Idunna* 1:4 (February 1989), pp.34-35.

accounts lead him out of Ásatrú even as the RoT was still reeling from the Satanism controversy.

The story would not end there. On the evening of 18 February 1991, Rob Meek murdered his wife, Ann Harrington, reportedly in her sleep, and buried her body at a land fill near the Dallas Airport. Following his arrest, he was ritually cursed throughout the Ásatrú community.<sup>194</sup> For the Ring of Troth however, the event--with which they had nothing to do save by association--was a second disaster. Meek was simply too deeply involved in the conflict with Thorsson and the RoT over Satanism for disclaimers pointing out that he was no longer an adherent of Ásatrú at the time of the crime to make much difference.<sup>195</sup> In the minds of many, Satanism and murder were of a piece, and the Ring of Troth was twice cursed. But the disaster would not be properly Dumézilian if it did not come in threes, and the expectant Ásatrú community was not to be disappointed.

It was at about this time that Edred Thorsson's connections to sadomasochistic practices became the gossip of the Ásatrú community. Thorsson for his part hardly made any secret of this--nor initially did he go out of his way to publicize it--but as with all of his activities, there was a religious dimension to the newest scandal which few Ásatrúers were ready to accept or understand. For Thorsson, it is through extremes, the polarity of pain and pleasure for example, that one achieves transcendence, and transcendence is the very essence of the Odinic archetype. More, Odin in one of his aspects is known as the god of fetters.

The idea for the actualization of this form of sexuality in a ritual context appears to have been drawn from the novel, *Story of O*, although according to Thorsson two

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<sup>194</sup> "Letters to Editor," *Vor Trú* 41 (Summer 2241/1991) p.30.

<sup>195</sup> Indeed, some still believe that Meek's fall was engineered magically by Edred Thorsson in his role as a Satanist. Thorsson denies this, saying that the Temple of Set--unlike the Church of Satan--does not use magical means to deal with mundane attacks. He was confident from the beginning that Meek would ultimately be destroyed, but by the gods, not by a magical working. Interview with Edred Thorsson, 15 April 1993.

traditional cultures, northern Europe and Japan, utilize these practices in a religious context.<sup>196</sup> However this news first became public, the Ásatrú community was soon fascinated to be apprised of the accoutrements of Edred Thorsson's shamanic journeys into the dark side of Odin. Unkind jokes about the 'Roissy Kindred' aside, Thorsson had once again made little secret of his practice of various forms of shamanic sex magic, and even in his popular market books, had given broad hints about the magical use of sadomasochistic practices. Borrowing loosely from Eliade, he offers this description, for example, of the use of seith [shamanic trance] magic:

To work seith...you must first achieve an altered state of consciousness. Traditionally, this was done with a variety or combination of techniques, including drugs, sleep deprivation, fasting, sensory overload, and even physical tortures, which might be combined with chanting, dancing, and perhaps the playing of some rhythmic instrument.<sup>197</sup>

It would be atypical for Edred Thorsson to actuate any practice without making an organization and/or a religion out of it, and so was born the Order of the Triskelion. The Triskelion refers to the three-pronged [Dumézil redux] signet ring worn by the habitués of Roissy, the domicile in which O is introduced to the polarities of pain and pleasure. There are two sub-orders in the Order of the Triskelion, the Roissy Society for male dominants and female submissives, and the Onyx Circle for female dominants and male submissives. Advancement in the group, as in the Temple of Set and Rune Gild, is by initiation, and membership is by invitation.<sup>198</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> Ibid. Cf. Pauline Réage, *Story of O* (New York: Ballentine, 1965).

<sup>197</sup> Edred Thorsson, *Northern Magic*, p. 161.

<sup>198</sup> Interview with Edred Thorsson, 15 April 1993. Cf. "Order of the Triskelion," unpublished, privately circulated form letters which outline the general tenets of the Order, outlining in one version outlines the Roissy Society and in another the Onyx Circle. n.d.

Clearly, Edred Thorsson--and James Chisholm as well--were simply too controversial to remain associated with the Ring of Troth if that organization was to survive. Thus, by 1991, the search was on for a new Steersman; one who would be free of damaging associations from the RoT's turbulent past. Thus, the search was focused outside of the Texas epicenter of the organization. There was some urgency to this search, for with the RoT seen as in disarray, there was talk throughout Ásatrú circles of forming a new, non-racialist grouping separate from the Ásatrú Alliance, but free as well from the taint of the RoT's current difficulties.<sup>199</sup> Eventually, the choice fell on the disgruntled former Thingspeaker of the Ásatrú Alliance, Phil Nearing of the Old Northwest Kindred.

Phil Nearing had by this time severed his relationship with the Alliance. In a letter dated 6 January 1991, Nearing tendered the resignation of the Old Northwest Kindred, stating it was in the "intellectual, political and spiritual interests" of the kindred to leave the organization, and that while they would be interested in continuing contacts with individual kindreds, they would nonetheless wish to be on the record in opposition to "any fascist and racist interpretations of Ásatrú and are not interested in interacting with groups or individuals who follow these lines of thought."<sup>200</sup> While still a member of the AA, Nearing, like William Bainbridge, was a member of the Rune Gild, and thus was known to Thorsson, and he had met James Chisholm at Althing 8.<sup>201</sup> Shortly after this, Nearing, by now increasingly disgusted with the racialism in the AA, wrote a letter to the RoT stating that he was not an enemy of the organization, but in fact, something of an ally, and

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<sup>199</sup> Interview with William Bainbridge, 24 January 1993.

<sup>200</sup> Letter from Phil Nearing to the Ásatrú Alliance, 6 January 1991. In an undated accompanying letter, Nearing tenders his formal resignation as Thingspeaker as well.

<sup>201</sup> Interview with Phil Nearing, 9 April 1993. Nearing recalls that at Althing 8, Chisholm had brought a copy of the manuscript for *A Book of Troth*, which he found interesting. Nearing's interest must have made an impact on Chisholm, who was struck by the indifference of all but a "few thoughtful individuals" to the manuscript. Interview with James Chisholm, 17 November 1992.

this opened a considerable correspondence. At this time however, Nearing first got wind of the murder of Rob Meek's wife, and this was confirmed by James Chisholm over the phone, although the latter expressed some surprise that he had heard about it so soon. With these scandals, Nearing was convinced privately that he would have nothing to do with leading the organization.<sup>202</sup> Still, when he was invited in July, 1991 to meet with Edred Thorsson and James Chisholm in an Austin restaurant to discuss Nearing's accepting the Steersmanship, the chance to meet Thorsson and assess the situation first hand was simply too inviting to pass up. From the perspective of the Austin group, primarily composed at this point of Thorsson, Chisholm, and the new *Idunna* editor, Ed Van Cura, the very fact that Nearing and company would take the trouble to fly down to Texas was evidence that "something was going to happen," even if no assurances or commitments had been made in advance. In the event however, they "acted like a bunch of tourists" according to Thorsson.<sup>203</sup>

In fact, this is precisely what the putative candidates were. Tales of the macabre doings in Austin were sufficiently lurid as to make the invitation irresistible. Still, Nearing deemed it advisable to bring trusted friends with him, and thus he asked William Bainbridge and one other well known independent Ásatrúer to attend.<sup>204</sup> Both agreed, and their separate accounts of the meeting are consistent in every important detail, despite some internal tension over conflicting policy goals between the three of them.

The most complete account of this meeting, and of the subsequent transfer of power to Prudence Priest and the 'de-Thorssonization' of the Ring of Troth--creating in effect the nucleus of the collective leadership noted with some pride by William Bainbridge above--is

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<sup>202</sup> "Satanism, murder and S&M just ain't going to make it for a religion that wants to grow..." Interview with Phil Nearing, 9 April 1993.

<sup>203</sup> Interview with Edred Thorsson, 15 April 1993.

<sup>204</sup> Interview with Phil Nearing, 9 April 1993.



offered by one of the three participants. His extended account is a fitting way to complete the consideration of the historical development of the Ring of Troth:

...in July 1991...Nearing...asked me to join him and William Bainbridge...to meet Edred Thorsson face to face. Nearing told me on the telephone beforehand that Thorsson had asked him to accept the post of Steersman of the Ring of Troth because Chisholm was ready to resign..I agreed to join Nearing and Bainbridge, partly out of curiosity because it would enable me to meet the notorious Edred Thorsson. I reached Austin first and met Nearing's plane. It was Friday. (Bainbridge's plane was not scheduled to arrive until almost midnight.) I had rented a car and I drove with Nearing to a restaurant where we arranged to meet Thorsson for dinner. He was waiting when we got there. During dinner, we talked about a wide range of topics, many not related to Ásatrú at all. (No one ever mentioned "The Temple of Set" throughout the entire weekend.) I found Thorsson to be a quiet, reserved man about 40--obviously intelligent and well versed in all the subjects we discussed. There seemed to be nothing unusual or "weird" about him. We arranged to meet again the next morning at a house he rented. Thorsson left the restaurant in his own car, and Nearing and I drove back to the airport to meet Bainbridge. The next morning (Saturday) the three of us arrived at Thorsson's house. There we were met in the living room by Edred Thorsson, James Chisholm, Dianne Ross, and Þórfinn Einarsson [Ed van Cura]. After the introductions had been made, we all went into another room. There was a large table with three chairs on each of its long sides. Thorsson sat down in the middle chair on one side, with Chisholm on his right and Ross on his left... Chisholm was wearing a large Mjölnir (Thor's Hammer) around his neck outside of his shirt. After a few preliminary remarks, Thorsson offered the Steersmanship to Nearing and, as he did so, Chisholm took the Mjölnir off his neck and prepared to hand it to Nearing. (Apparently the Mjölnir was a badge of office.)<sup>205</sup> At this point, Nearing said he felt that he could not accept the Steersmanship because he did not have enough people in Chicago to properly run the Ring of Troth. Thorsson was obviously completely surprised by this. Chisholm sat there holding the Mjölnir in his hands unsure of what to do next. Thorsson then turned to Bainbridge, and asked him if he would consider being the Steersman. Bainbridge said no, citing the same reasons Nearing had given. Then, to my utter amazement, Thorsson offered the Steersmanship to me. Like the others, I too refused to accept it, giving once more the reasons Nearing had given. After a few awkward moments, Chisholm replaced the Mjölnir around his own neck and we all went back into the living room...the subject of the Steersmanship never came up again...

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<sup>205</sup> This observation is correct. Conversation with Prudence Priest, 22 November 1992.

It took some time to find a new leader for the Ring of Troth, but Prudence Priest accepted the office of Steerswoman/Steersman from James Chisholm at a ceremony held just north of San Francisco in March 1992.<sup>206</sup>

With the transfer of the Steersmanship to Prudence Priest, the first phase of the Ring of Troth, the era of Edred Thorsson, came to a close. William Bainbridge is correct in his assertion, offered as a plea for patience, that the current RoT is in fact a new creation, at this writing only a year old. And at this writing as well, the Ásatrú Alliance under Mike Murray continues much as it was before. What then, can be said about the future of these Ásatrú organizations, and indeed, about the Ásatrú community as a whole?

### Conclusion

With the Ring of Troth (RoT), the successor organization which emerged at the same time as the Ásatrú Alliance from the wreckage of the Ásatrú Free Assembly, the three factors which governed the choice of Ásatrú/Odinism for inclusion in this dissertation become clear. In terms of location, the Ring of Troth is in a very real sense the most 'accessible face of the Odinist/Ásatrú community'. Where Odinism has found a comfortable niche in the white supremacist constellation (and thus, off the map of contemporary cultural discourse), individual Odinists, primarily in the pages of *Vor Trú* and at the Ásatrú Alliance Althings, do interact with the Ásatrú community. Thus, while the Alliance inhabit a border area only tenuously linking the magical/neo-pagan community with the millenarian theorists in the white supremacist world, they are intertwined as well with the decidedly non-racist Ring of Troth. No better example of the Alliance-Ring of

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<sup>206</sup> Interview with independent Ásatrúer (name withheld), 14 October 1992. Edred Thorsson adds that Prudence Priest, with whom he had once considered co-authoring a book) was a Bainbridge choice, and one upon which he prefers today to reserve comment, noting that of the potential candidates, "she doesn't have anything that is terribly bad, and people like her." Interview with Edred Thorsson, 15 April 1993.

Troth connection could be posited than William Bainbridge. Bainbridge has appeared in these pages in his roles with the Arizona Kindred and in his activities at the Ásatrú Alliance Althings, but he is in addition a current member of the High Reed of the Ring of Troth, where he serves as Wordsmith (minister of communication and master of the delicate art of internal negotiation). Indeed, cross-membership in the Ásatrú Alliance and the Ring of Troth may be rather the norm, thanks to the RoT's practice of enrolling subscribers to their official journal, *Idunna*, in the organization unless the subscriber specifically declines membership on the subscription form.

In its turn, the Ring of Troth sits comfortably in the wiccan/neo-pagan community, and is so diverse that its core and peripheral members are identified with such unlikely bedfellows as several strains of Satanism *and* with that scourge of Satanists (real or imagined), the cult awareness movement! Indeed, individuals within the Ring of Troth reflect an often astonishing diversity, including members with inter-racial marriages, and members whose kindreds boast Jewish, black, and homosexual membership. One kindred even includes a trans-sexual Ásatrúer!

The Ring of Troth's location and diversity appears to be an important factor in its viability. It is the Ásatrú group that, for better or worse, 'looks most like America', to borrow a contemporary cultural catchphrase. Not the least of this diversity is a scholarly core group; a tradition begun by Edred Thorsson, and carried on today by KveldúlfR Gundarsson. While it may be argued with some justice that the RoT's original mission--the creation of a trained, professional Ásatrú priesthood--is far from realization, and that, indeed, the serious scholarly ideal upon which the organization was founded is in danger of being left by the wayside, nonetheless, the organization is by far the greatest source of research on the revitalization of the tradition on the basis of the historical record. More, the leadership of the Ring of Troth has been the most outspoken in their opposition to racialism and in their quest to form a community of believers which would be congenial to the

establishment of stable families, and would thus hold out the greatest potential for establishing Ásatrú as a viable, minority religious community in the American context.

More, in Weberian terms as these have been adapted to the academic study of new religious movements, it is the Ring of Troth, with all of its turbulent history, rather than the Alliance which most fits the profile of a movement destined to succeed. For its original charismatic founder, Edred Thorsson, a true visionary but a hopeless administrator, routinized his own (and thus the organization's) charisma by investing it in a governing board, the High Rede, and left much of the decision making to that body. Conversely, in the Ásatrú Alliance, no obvious successor to Mike Murray has emerged, while even the early experiment in transferring authority in the organization, the election of Phil Nearing to the office of Thingspeaker as mandated by the By-Laws in 1989, was unsuccessful in balancing Murray's influence. In theoretical terms, this does not bode well for the post-Murray future of the Alliance.<sup>207</sup>

It is with the factor of compatibility that the Ring of Troth most clearly emerges as a unique component of the Ásatrú community. For while the Ring of Troth's location suggests compatibility with the Ásatrú Alliance, with the Wiccan/neo-pagan community, and indeed, in a very real sense with the mainstream culture as a product of the RoT's diversity, the direction in which the organization is developing would appear to argue for further turbulence. Of key importance in this regard is the Ring of Troth's relationship with the Ásatrú Alliance. Here, despite William Bainbridge's very real skills as a conciliator, and the *Idunna* subscription equals membership policy, the Alliance and the RoT give every appearance of being two trains going full speed in opposite directions. Should this trend continue, it will be a terrible blow to the hopes of many of the adherents

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<sup>207</sup> J. Gordon Melton, "Introduction: When Prophets Die: The Succession Crisis in New Religions," in Timothy Miller, ed., *When Prophets Die: The Postcharismatic Fate of New Religious Movements*. Cf. Bryan R. Wilson, "Factors in the Failure of the New Religious Movements," in David G. Bromley and Phillip E. Hammond, eds., *The Future of New Religious Movements* (Macon, GA: Mercer Press, 1987), p. 33.

in both camps who would like to see Ásatrú become an established, and indeed, respected minority religious community in America on the model of Wicca in one sense, but in the longer term, that of any of the 'new religions' who have found a comfortable space in the American religious mosaic.

Yet unlike the Ring of Troth--and a number of independents who find the RoT philosophy more attractive than that of the AA--the Alliance, with the sole exception of Althing 9, has evinced considerably less interest in finding a place in the dominant cultural ethos of America. It is in this compatibility with both the magical community and the dominant culture that the Ring of Troth most clearly stands apart from the Ásatrú Alliance, and it is precisely this factor which appears destined, unless steps are taken relatively soon to heal the growing breach, to render the organizations as distinct--and incompatible--as the Ring of Troth is with, say, Else Christianson's Odinist Fellowship.

While this observation is meant as neither final nor inevitable, it is clear that some action must be taken relatively soon to bring a unified direction to the Ásatrú community. For while most neo-pagan reconstructed traditions are accorded the space and time for development, Ásatrú simply does not have this luxury. The danger facing Ásatrú is, unfortunately, inherent in its location. Border regions have ever been perilous places to dwell. The Northern Way in the context of contemporary America has chosen a particularly hazardous location--even by the standards of a self-professed warrior religion. For they stand at the gateway to that most feared and despised of American belief systems; white supremacy. Beyond the walls which they have elected to ward lie the demons who lurk at the frayed edges of the modern American consciousness: Nazis and Klansmen, Christian Identity and the Church of the Creator, and so many more. If this dissertation's close examination of many of these groups has revealed that, shorn of their popular media mystique, these adherents are considerably less than a threat to the continued existence of the republic, it remains true nonetheless that the very invocation of these names generate fear within the dominant culture, and thus carries the ultimate threat of suppression. And it

is the compatibility of some elements of this contemporary cultural demonology with some elements of the Northern Way which may (and as the next chapter demonstrates, did) awaken forces capable of dislodging the movement from its border redoubt and into the wilderness inhabited by the white supremacist constellation.

If, and indeed, when, this comes to pass, and if history offers any relevant lesson, it is this: self-appointed watchdogs have little incentive to document diversity within a target movement and every incentive to portray the victim as a monolith, innately evil and inimical to all which the dominant culture holds dear. Further, government agencies, acting under pressure generated by the access which the watchdogs have to the popular press, and often acting on information supplied by the watchdogs themselves, have shown little ability to differentiate between opposing strains of thought within a movement which has been branded as 'evil' (read racist, communist, fascist, or insert any other 'ist' or 'ism' of the day). And the Ásatrú movement, as will be demonstrated at greater length in the following chapter on the anti-cult movement, has come under scrutiny by precisely those organizations who in reality draw the maps upon which the hermeneutics of cultural compatibility are based.

## II. Paths to the Reconstruction of the Northern Way

Having considered at such length the organizational history of Odinism and the Ásatrú community, this chapter would be remiss were it to ignore the vitality of a belief system which is, when all is said and done, a religion in every sense of the term. Thus, some effort should be made to answer the complex questions surrounding the methods by which the tradition is currently being reconstructed, and of even more interest, to consider why is this process happening now, why today? Why have the adherents of Ásatrú and Odinism found the need at this moment in history to bring the Norse/Germanic religious

tradition back to life? Or, put another way, why have the gods chosen to make their presence known to their select adherents at this time?

In the course of this research, two primary approaches to the reconstruction of the tradition have been most apparent: the modernist reconstruction and the geneticist reconstruction. The modernist reconstruction has been discussed at some length--albeit in other guises. The genetic reconstruction will merit closer attention.

Two important preliminary points must be made regarding this analysis. First, it is difficult for an overwhelmingly monotheistic society to take seriously the suggestion that the pagan community invests in its pantheon of gods the same cognition of reality--or a comparable degree of faith--as do adherents of the Abrahamic religions in relation to their God.<sup>208</sup> This widespread public skepticism finds considerable support in the literature emanating from the wiccan/neo-pagan community itself, with widespread evidence that many of these reconstructed spiritual traditions are as much deifications of contemporary socio-political grievances (i.e., wicca and feminism, various manifestations of earth spirituality and ecology, and the like) as they are manifestations of polytheistic belief. The discourse becomes even more confused with the strong impact of psychological and psychoanalytical concepts into the emerging theodicies of many of the reconstructed traditions.<sup>209</sup> These difficulties notwithstanding, it is a primary finding of this research

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208 Wilfred von Dauster, "How Can You Believe That Junk?" *Mountain Thunder* 4 (1992), pp. 20-21.

209 For an overview of the contemporary scene from an insiders perspective, again Margot Adler, *Drawing Down the Moon*, is the place to start. A similar, if much earlier book by a rather eccentric insider aspires to the same general survey of the wiccan/neo-pagan world of the early 1970s, and demonstrates, when read with Adler, how difficult the process of investing long dormant deities with vitality can be. See Hans Holzer, *The Truth About Witchcraft* (New York: Doubleday, 1969), or from a journalistic perspective, John Goodwin, *Occult America* (New York: Doubleday, 1972). The process can be seen in microcosm through the work of Sociologist William Sims Bainbridge (no relation to the Ásatrúer of the same name). Bainbridge studied the British Satanist/psychotherapy group, the Process, which he inexplicably dubs the Power, and it is in the theological and psychological transformations of the group and its members that the complexity of the neo-pagan enterprise can be apprehended. William Sims Bainbridge, *Satan's Power: A Deviant Psychotherapy Cult* (Berkely: University of California Press, 1978). Also from the

that to attempt an analysis of Odinism and Ásatrú from a psychological, sociological or an historical perspective as an interesting specimen of contemporary phenomenology while discounting the importance, indeed, the reality, of the gods and goddesses of the Norse/Germanic pantheon in the lives of the adherents of the Northern Way is to miss the vital heart of the reconstruction of the tradition. To the adherents themselves, the gods and goddesses are real!

This reality however, is not say that, to take a grossly simplified example, that Odin exists and Yahweh does not, or more to the point, that Odin is Yahweh by another name. As we have seen, Odin is dealt with in a considerably different manner than a Jew, a Christian or a Muslim would entreat his God. The relationship is less one of creator to creation, or of distant all-knowing and all-powerful spirit to weak, mortal flesh, than it is to

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academic perspective is the sympathetic treatment by Gini Graham Scott, *Cult and Countercult: A Study of a Spiritual Growth Group and a Witchcraft Order*, Contributions in Sociology Series, no. 28, (London: Greenwood Press, 1980).

A group of scholarly articles, largely from an insider perspective, offer insights into some of the motive forces behind the rebirth of the Old Religions: in this case, wicca and feminism, and wicca and ecology, which in that order appear to stand as the twin pillars of the emerging wiccan theodicy. See Carol P. Christ, "Why Women Need the Goddess: Phenomenological, Psychological, and Political Reflections," in *The Politics of Women's Spirituality*, Charlene Spretnak, ed. (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press, 1982); Starhawk, "Ethics and Justice in Goddess Religion," in *Ibid.*; Naomi Goldenberg, "Feminist Witchcraft: Controlling Our Own Inner Space," in *Ibid.*; and Howard Eilberg-Schwartz, "Witches of the West: Neopaganism and Goddess Worship as Enlightenment Religions," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 1:5 (Spring 1989).

The complexity of the reconstructive enterprise is further demonstrated in two insider volumes which have recently emerged from wiccan circles; one academic and the other popular. Aidan A. Kelly, *Crafting the Art of Magic, Book I, A History of Modern Witchcraft 1939-1964* (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 1991), debunks every aspect of the historical and thus theological claims of Gardnerian wicca--yet does not find this a reason to leave the Craft. Rather, he finds in this creativity the primary strength--and basis for continued success--of the tradition. Chas. A. Clifton on the other hand, while tacitly conceding Kelly's point (without mentioning the heretic by name), offers a stern defense of the reality of the tradition in his own contributions to this anthology volume, and publishes contributions from what could best be called the 'Ahmen Corner' of the Craft (were this term not so insensitively Christian). Chas A. Clifton, *The Modern Craft Movement: Witchcraft Today, Book One* (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 1992). Finally, for purposes of comparison, the reader is invited to examine a mature work of wiccan belief and praxis which offers a good insight into the tradition in its most developed form; Janet and Stewart Farrar, *A Witches Bible Complete* (New York: Magickal Child, 1984).



father to child, or tribal Elder to youthful warrior. Ásatrúers do not bend the knee even to Odin, and of more central import, the deities, and often the lesser spirits, are a very real part of the everyday lives of many of the adherents. This having been said, it must also be asserted that the Ásatrú/Odinist communities today are primarily a band of first generation converts whose faith and practice must of necessity be considered in the context of having been born into monotheistic (and rarely, agnostic or atheistic) families, and having come of age in a monotheistic (albeit increasingly secularized) American culture. For the gods to become a natural part of the lives of the community, for their worship to become less a conscious act of differentiation from the dominant culture and more of the sort of subconscious belief which is at the heart of the faith of religious monotheists, it will be necessary to hand down the faith to a generation born into the belief system; a generation for whom the world has already been 'remagicalized' to borrow again from Berger, and for whom the the spiritual world has been made anew.

For most adherents of the Northern Way, this transformation from a monotheistic to polytheistic *zeitgeist* is as yet partial, and the perfecting of this faith through ritual practice, through textual study, and most important of all, through trial and error is a day to day affair. In this sense, it is praxis rather than theological speculation which is the true test of the success of the reconstructive effort. Thus, this chapter's heavy emphasis on organizational history. Yet theology is important, and for the adherent, the gods are real, if yet imperfectly perceived. Thus, the speculative nature of the consideration offered below on the streams of thought surrounding the reconstruction of the Norse/Germanic tradition in the modern world.

The second point is more succinctly made, and echoes once again the admonition offered in the introduction to this chapter's attempt to map the spiritual space claimed by the Northern Way. That is, the Ásatrú and Odinist communities are very young, and the borders dividing them remain fluid. Just as it was no easy task to demonstrate a definite point of demarcation between the adherents of Odinism and the Ásatrú community, so too

will it prove daunting to attempt to delineate hard and fast divisions between adherents of the reconstructive strategies suggested below. Yet, while some overlap is unavoidable, there are differences in approach, and these cleavages are important. More, if history is again any guide, these diverse approaches to the reconstruction of the faith may well harden as the community matures. If this occurs and remedial steps are not taken, these differences may well prove more divisive than is the issue of race is today. Indeed, it has over time been theological questions such as these which often become the bases for the kind of sectarian divisions which so often turn a religious community into warring camps. If Ásatrú/Odinism in particular is to survive in the face of the powerful opposition now coalescing against it, these sectarian tendencies must be avoided at all costs.

With this introduction then, the first reconstructive strategy to be considered will be that of 'modernism'.

### The Modernist Reconstruction

While it is impossible to document this observation with precision, it is clear on the basis of this research that the overwhelming body of Ásatrúers, be they members of national Ásatrú organizations, unaffiliated local kindreds, or independent practitioners fit comfortably into this category. The modernist approach to the reconstruction of the tradition generally corresponds to the generally accepted meaning of the term neo-pagan or neoheathen to adopt a more Ásatrú usage, in that the primary task of the religious community is to bring to life the heart of the pre-Christian tradition; its religious practices and beliefs, its texts, its forms of magic (and especially in Ásatrú, the runes), and indeed, as much of its cosmology and and theodicy as possible *within the constraints of the modern world*. Modernity, or post-modernity, is here the key defining concept. Among Ásatrúers of the modernist camp, the goal is not to return to the life of, say, the tenth century when Haraldr Bluetooth, the Danish king converted to Christianity, or more to the point, to the

eleventh century when the conversion of Iceland took place.<sup>210</sup> Rather, reconstruction to this group means that the recovered heathen spirituality must be fully cognizant of the exigencies of living as a minority religious community in contemporary America.

The religion in this conception should not have to be hidden for fear of adverse reactions from employers, family or friends as it often is today. Neither should the Northern Way be perceived as a threat to the American status quo, to the state, or to any of its citizens (see chapter 6). Rather, as the rituals, mythos, cosmology and theodicy are reconstructed, the primary effort is centered on integrating the spiritual essence of the ancient materials into lives which, beyond the sphere of alternative spirituality, appear to differ little from other Americans of the same racial, educational and economic backgrounds. Thus, while the ultimate goal may be the creation of an entirely new *zeitgeist* which is neither fully pre-Christian nor fully modern (or post-modern), but rather, a powerful synthesis of the two. This, it is hoped, will present an attractive religious model which may, if the gods are willing, one day perhaps supplant Christianity and restore to the world a natural order which the conversion to Christianity interrupted, but did not entirely extinguish.

The two primary systems by which this magical tradition is being recovered are seith and galdor magic.<sup>211</sup> It is in the adaptation of these systems for practical use in today's world, along with the hermeneutics attending the Eddic and saga literatures, that the

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<sup>210</sup> KveldúlfR Gundarsson, *Teutonic Religion*, Appendix IV. Iceland, primary source of the surviving Eddas and Sagas, has a particular impact on the reconstructive effort today. See for example, Joe Simpson, "The Catastrophic Eleventh Century," *Vor Trú* 31 (Yule/Winter 2238/1988), p.10.

<sup>211</sup> Seith is essentially a form of shamanic magic, while galdor is a magical form with a number of practical applications. Galdor involves the use of language in all cases, and in one specific working centers on the use of rune staves. Galdor is practiced today for purposes including divination, warding (talismanic magic), and sympathetic and hex magic, to name but a few. See KveldúlfR Gundarsson, *Teutonic Magic* (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 1990); or Edred Thorsson, *Northern Magic*, for introductions to seith and galdor magic.

conception of the modernist reconstruction of the tradition is best illustrated. Of the materials at the heart of the reconstruction of the Northern Way, none are arguably more important than the efforts being invested into rune lore. The runes are central to the Northern Way, serving both to differentiate the Norse/Germanic tradition from other neo-pagan communities, and as an initial port of entry for a number of contemporary Ásatrúers who report being drawn to the tradition by an initial interest in the runes. There are currently no less than four major runic alphabets, known as Futharks by virtue of an anagram of its first six letters. In the world of modern Ásatrú, there exists no absolute consensus over which of these are most efficacious for contemporary use. Purists, among them KveldúlfR Gundarsson, argues for the 24 stave Elder Futhark as the most viable for magical uses.<sup>212</sup> Edred Thorsson<sup>213</sup> however, with Freyja Aswynn<sup>214</sup> from Great Britain the primary force behind the reconstruction of the runic traditions, tellingly argues that the Elder Futhark be reserved for solely magical purposes, while the younger Anglo-

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<sup>212</sup> KveldúlfR Gundarsson, *Teutonic Religion*, Appendix II. For (far) greater detail, see KveldúlfR Gundarsson, *Teutonic Magic*; and for a good, brief, introduction bridging the two texts, see Kveldulf Hagan Gundarsson, "The Runes: A Brief Introduction," *Mountain Thunder* 4 (1992), pp. 7-9.

<sup>213</sup> Thorsson remains master of the Rune Gild. This organization is much reduced from its pre-Temple of Set membership, although this may be due as much to the fact that Thorsson has already published much of the material that the Rune Gild sold in small increments. Thorsson's bibliography of purely runic material is impressive. Beginning with the publication of his doctoral dissertation as Stephen E. Flowers, this list includes: Stephen E. Flowers, *Runes and Magic: Magic Formulaic Elements in the Older Runic Tradition*, Series I Germanic Languages and Literature, vol. 53, (New York: Peter Lang, 1986); Edred Thorsson, *Futhark: A Handbook of Rune Magic* (York Beach, ME: Weiser, 1984); Edred Thorsson, *Runelore: A Handbook of Esoteric Runology* (York Beach, ME: Weiser, 1987); Edred Thorsson, *At the Well of Wyrd: A Handbook of Runic Divination* (York Beach, ME: Weiser, 1988); and Edred Thorsson, *Rune-Might: Secret Practices of the German Rune Magicians* (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 1989).

<sup>214</sup> Freyja Aswynn, *Leaves of Yggdrasil* (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 1990). Freyja Aswynn has become an increasingly sought after figure among American Ásatrúers since the Temple of Set controversy placed a shadow over Thorsson's work. In April, 1993, an anonymous American adherent paid for an air ticket and a brief American tour for Freyja Aswynn. Conversation with that anonymous adherent, 4 April 1993. It should be noted too that she is, in Edred Thorsson's description, "the spiritual leader of the Rune Gild for me in U. K." Letter from Edred Thorsson, 13 May 1993.

Saxon Futhark be used for other communications due to its closer correspondence to the English alphabet.<sup>215</sup>

The precise origin of the Elder Futhark is lost to history, and if truth be told, even the uses for which the few surviving inscriptions which date between the first and eighth century CE were intended are subjects of scholarly dispute.<sup>216</sup> There is no controversy however, as to the mythic origins of the runes, and it is this mythos which forms a primary tenet of Ásatrú belief today. The runes in this view originated with the nine days and nights during which, pierced by a spear, Odin hung from Yggdrasil, the World Tree:

I know that I hung  
on the windswept tree  
for nine full nights,  
wounded with a spear  
and given to Odinn,  
myself to myself;  
on that tree  
of which none know  
from what roots it rises.

They did not comfort me with bread,  
and not with the drinking horn;  
I peered downward,  
I grasped the 'runes',  
screeching I grasped them;  
I fell back from there. [*Hávamál* 138145]<sup>217</sup>

While the shamanistic implications of this myth were considered elsewhere in this chapter, it is the use to which the hard won runes were put by Odin and the

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<sup>215</sup> Edred Thorsson, *A Book of Troth*, p. 103. Cf. KveldúlfR Gundarsson, *Teutonic Religion*, Appendix II.

<sup>216</sup> There appears to be little controversy in Ásatrú circles that, as Thorsson claimed in his PhD dissertation, the purpose was magical. Stephen E. Flowers, *Runes and Magic: Magic Formulaic Elements in the Older Runic Tradition*, p. 1.

<sup>217</sup> E.O.G. Turville-Petre, *Myth and Religion of the North*, pp. 42-51. Cf. H.R. Ellis Davidson, *Gods and Myths of Northern Europe*, pp. 143-145.

Norse/Germanic pantheon (and their contemporary cult) which concerns us here. Edred Thorsson points out that the word 'rune' means 'mystery' in Icelandic, and the greatest of these mysteries--and the primary symbol of the potency of runic magic--is illustrated by a secret tradition that he contends reveals in part the riddle of what Odin whispered into the ear of his slain son, Baldur, the most beautiful and beloved of the gods.<sup>218</sup> That word, either 'rune' or a phrase containing the term, he believes, imparted the secrets of life and death, of past and future, and allowed Baldur, following the apocalypse of Ragnarök, to return to the earth (Midgard) and invest it once again with light, with beauty, and with life... To Thorsson, and to other contemporary rune magicians, the ultimate prize of the quest to recover runic knowledge through magical means is nothing less than this: the recovery of the ancient knowledge, the hidden mysteries of the gods in which past and future are revealed to the present, and to unite the 9 worlds of gods and wights and men.<sup>219</sup>

While this dissertation has attempted no more than to impart basic definitions of these runic systems of magic, it is important to remember as a preliminary rule of thumb that when reference is made to a rune in this magical context, three interdependent aspects

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<sup>218</sup> Edred Thorsson, *Northern Magic*, pp. 54-55. The enigmatic stanza in question, taken from the *Vafþrúdnismál* [54], reads:

What did Odin whisper  
before he climbed on the pyre  
into the ear of his son?

E.O.G. Turville-Petre, *Myth and Religion of the North*, p. 110. The somewhat abbreviated version of this episode is found in the Younger Edda [Prose Edda] in Snorri Sturluson, *The Prose Edda*, Jean I Young, trans., pp. 80-82. Dumézil's interesting interpretation of this in which the myth itself is broken down into a three stage drama is found in Georges Dumézil, *Gods of the Ancient Northmen*, pp. 58-65.

<sup>219</sup> For a useful guide to the many volumes now on the market purporting to deal with various aspects of rune lore, see Marnie Anderson, "A Survey of Current Literature on the Esoteric Aspects of Runology," *Idunna* 1:3 (1988) pp.11-21. On the nine worlds, see Kveldúlfur Gundarsson, *Teutonic Religion*, ch. 2.

are being referenced: the sound, the stave or shape, and the hidden lore of the rune.<sup>220</sup>

Each rune in the Futhark thus has an independent 'personality' as it were, its own use, its own history, and its own mysteries. With this introduction then, perhaps the best way to illustrate the concept of the modernist approach to the reconstruction of the tradition is through a series of brief examples, almost anecdotal in form, which together may serve to illustrate the applicability of the lore to the everyday lives of the Ásatrú community.

No better place to begin a survey of this sort could be offered than the juxtaposition of two recent articles which concern the sacred and mundane use of the runes in contemporary Ásatrú. One of the better examples of this praxis is offered by KveldúlfR Gundarsson in an article illustrating the creation of a drinking horn. Following a series of historical examples of drinking horns and their runic inscriptions taken from the saga literature, Gundarsson selects as his text a passage from the Second Lay of Gudhrún in which the heroine drinks from an enchanted horn covered with rune staves. The meaning of the passage is explained in terms of the interaction of the herbs and the runes which work together to produce their intended effect, for: "Runic formulae on a horn can either be geared towards a specific end, or generally chosen to enhance whatever is done to the draught in the horn."<sup>221</sup> A mundane application of the runes is offered by Gamlinginn who proudly presents a 31 stave standardized alphabet with accompanying phonetic values which he calls the Standard International Futhark (SIF). The SIF is currently available in computer fonts for IBM compatible and Macintosh PCs.<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>220</sup> Edred Thorsson, *Northern Magic*, p. 56.

<sup>221</sup> KveldúlfR Hagen Gundarsson, "The Magic and Making of the Drinking Horn," *Mountain Thunder* 8 (Spring Equinox 1993), pp. 11-12. Gundarsson offers a number of runic inscriptions with their English translations which may be used for specific purposes, including love, power, health and inspiration.

<sup>222</sup> Gamlinginn, "The Standard International Futhark," *Mountain Thunder* 6 (1992), p. 4.

Gamlinginn in fact appears to have inspired Ymir Thunarsson, a member of the High Rede of the Ring of Troth and the leader of Eagles' Reaches, one of the more idiosyncratic kindreds in modern Ásatrú (no small achievement, that) to step forth and boldly proclaim the obvious: that if, as Gamlinginn predicts, Ásatrú is poised to become a major global force after the fall of Christianity, it is important for every true man and woman to practice worship, ritual and magical workings on a daily basis. This assertion, and its accompanying suggestions for useful rituals, is accompanied by a widely felt perception regarding the Ring of Troth:

All too often the leadership of the movement known as Ásatrú takes to the high road of scholastic achievement and as a byproduct their writing has taken on the form of a university lecture or a grand thesis beyond the scope of common folk...for our movement to truly succeed we must reach and inflame both the hearts and minds of the everyday person male and female alike...[after Christianity's fall] "How do I transform myself into one worthy to be named true and good?"...The answer is really so simple that I feel that many of my more scholarly friends may have missed it. **IT IS THROUGH THE POWER AND RITUAL OF DAILY WORKINGS!** <sup>223</sup> [emphasis in original]

A primary goal of ritual, of course, is to remagicalize the world. James Chisholm offers an unexcelled example of this in his utilization of the Lay of Alvis as source text for a series of blessings (worship rituals) and workings (magical acts) centered on the dwarves whose aid can be secured in various tasks and whose happiness and good will one would

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<sup>223</sup> Ymir Thunarsson, "The Importance of Daily Workings," *On Wings of Eagles* 1:1 (Dec/Jan 1992), p. 10. The reference to Gamlinginn recalls his speech on the evils of racism to the Ásatrú Alliance. See Gamlinginn, "Speech at Althing 12 of the Ásatrú Alliance (22-24 May 1992)." Thunarsson is actually a bit harsh with regard to the intellectual elite of the RoT in this passage. Thorsson's *A Book of Troth* is nothing if not a 'how to' manual for daily practice, and *Idunna* is not without articles on daily rituals. KveldúlfR Gundarsson is perhaps the richest source of ritual practice—including rituals performed at Eagles' Reaches' functions. See KveldúlfR Hagen Gundarsson, "Yule at Eagles' Reaches," *Mountain Thunder* 8 (Spring Equinox 1993), p. 28, in which Gundarsson recounts the sacrifice of a pig in epic terms (albeit in terms which are considerably sanitized from the messy and chaotic event).



want to assure in any case.<sup>224</sup> Chisholm goes on to argue for the reconstruction of the sacred dramas which accompanied the Ostara holiday. These were, according to Chisholm, Vanic rites, thus primarily sexual in nature, which are recorded in the lays of Skirner, Svipdag and Sigdrifa. As the rites recorded in these texts were redacted in Christian times, shorn of their sexual content, Chisholm suggests various methods by which the rituals could be revived, albeit with the sexuality attendant on the pre-Christian original modified considerably to suit contemporary American sensibilities.<sup>225</sup>

In another series of articles featured in *Mountain Thunder*, other practical applications of the textual tradition are offered. Charles Armour, an adherent resident in the mountains of Colorado, presents a long running series on herbal lore.<sup>226</sup> A series by Tony Wolf in the same publication on the warrior tradition, emphasizing often somewhat fanciful forms of 'Norse martial arts', are also based (rather loosely) on textual sources.<sup>227</sup>

The incessant debate over race within Ásatrú may be the most important example of praxis in the modernist reconstruction of the tradition. In this discourse, the more racist adherents tend to take on faith the proposition that, because Norse/Germanic societies were

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<sup>224</sup> James Chisholm. "Working with the Wights and Forces of the Lay of Alvis." *Idunna* 2:2 (October 1989), pp.2-12. Wights refer to a number of supernatural beings, of whom the dwarves are only one. Elves, Vanes, giants and trolls are but a few of this class of beings.

<sup>225</sup> James Chisholm, "The Rites of Ostara: Possibilities for Today," *Idunna* 1:4 (February 1989), pp.7-10.

<sup>226</sup> Charles Armour, "Mortar & Pestle," *Mountain Thunder* 1 (1991), pp. 9-10. Every subsequent issue of *Mountain Thunder* carries a "Mortar and Pestle" feature by Armour.

<sup>227</sup> Tony Wolf, "Rammaukin: Esoteric Aspects of the Northern Warrior Tradition," *Mountain Thunder* 2 (1991), pp. 7-11; Tony Wolf, "Ordeal: The Ritual Trials of Rammaukin," *Mountain Thunder* 4 (1992), pp. 22-24; Tony Wolf, "The Godlauss: Atheism in the Northern Warrior Tradition," *Mountain Thunder* 5 (1992), pp. 19-20; Tony Wolf, "The Rite of the Flaming Arrow," *Mountain Thunder* 7 (1992), p. 5; and Tony Wolf, "Re-Forging the Blade: Practical Aspects of the Northern Warrior Tradition Riddaraskap," *Mountain Thunder* 8 (Spring Equinox 1993), pp. 17-18.

demonstrably of one racial stock, ergo, this 'felicitous' condition must reflect the exclusivist racial consciousness of the Golden Age forefathers.<sup>228</sup> The most outspoken voices for racial inclusion in Ásatrú however, tend to utilize materials drawn from the tradition which are adapted to the context of contemporary America.

KveldúlfR Gundarsson is perhaps the prime example of the "PC Pagan" available in contemporary Ásatrú.<sup>229</sup> He rarely misses an opportunity in his writings to uncover--often through complex hermeneutics--an important role for women in the history of the tradition, and on this precedent, women are invited to take an honored place in the reconstructed tradition as fully equal partners with male Ásatrúers.<sup>230</sup> In a scholarly rebuke to those who would take up Odinism (or Ásatrú) as a means to give vent to racist feelings, as well as to the more scholarly adherents of metagenetics (considered below), Gundarsson considers the historical record which saw no hesitation among the Norse or the German tribes to freely intermarry with any outsiders who were in proximity, pointing out (with some irony, given the constituency of contemporary Ásatrú) that "the Norse who settled Iceland brought along Irish thralls...with whom they interbred so freely that

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<sup>228</sup> No real documentation are ever offered in support of this proposition, and in truth, it appears to reflect more faithfully a modern, American *zeitgeist* in which race is an important (or obsessive) facet of every day life than a pagan Norse or Germanic view of the world. For the characteristics of this American mindset, see George W. Stocking, Jr., *Race, Culture and Evolution* (New York: Free Press, 1968).

<sup>229</sup> The term is borrowed from Wilfred von Dauster, "The PC Pagan?" *Mountain Thunder* 5 (1992), p. 3. Von Dauster, the editor of *Mountain Thunder* and an independent Ásatrúer, is himself a powerful voice against racism in the religion. In this article he decries racism and anti-Semitism, while in a more recent issue, he goes so far as to voice support for gay rights in Colorado in the context of the recent 'Amendment 2' controversy in which Colorado voters decided to invalidate local ordinances which, it was felt, offered special rights to this community. See Wilfred von Dauster, "Who's Next?" *Mountain Thunder* 8 (Spring Equinox 1993), pp. 3-4.

<sup>230</sup> See KveldúlfR Gundarsson, *Teutonic Religion*, for a classic example. At the same time, he never gives in to the temptation to write in the context of "Norse Wicca," which is in fact a form of wiccan feminism in Viking dress. See for a particularly egregious example of this pseudo-history, D. J. Conway, *Norse Magic* (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 1991). For a much deserved expression of contempt for this volume, see Gunnora Hallakarva, "A Book Review," *Mountain Thunder* 2 (1991), pp. 22-23.

bloodtype groupings show the average Icelfander to be 25% to 75% Irish."<sup>231</sup> What's more, the gods themselves interbred frequently; the Æsir with the Vanes, both with giants, gods with humans (and Loki, with a horse, for that matter). Indeed, examples of adoption of outsiders into the tribe (or Troth) is proven to have been a common institution for gods and men in the texts, just as the sagas prove that true birth and ancestry does not guarantee that one so fortunate is true of soul. Finally, in an indirect rebuke to metageneticists, Gundarsson points out that the sagas prove conclusively that no current adherent of Ásatrú can claim pure descent from the pagan Golden Age, for by accepting Christian baptism (as all eventually did), they were cut off from the soul line of the ancestors, with attendant loss of "the gods and goddesses...the ancestral kin-fetch and the personal fetch as well."<sup>232</sup>

Gamlinginn, despite unconvincing protestations of naïveté, is certainly the most astute member of the Ásatrú community in the ways and wiles of the world--particularly in the reaction of state authorities to small, nonconformist religious or political groupings whose beliefs are deemed to be 'inconvenient'. An independent Ásatrúer, he has been extremely outspoken in his demand for an Ásatrú community open to anyone, regardless of their race or previous religious affiliation. Gamlinginn seems motivated to undertake this crusade by two primary impulses. One is personal, and as he has asked that his privacy not be violated pursuant to this research, this will not be further considered. The other is clearly political and belies his claims to puzzlement at the ways of the world. In his speech to Althing 12 in May 1992, he urges the racist and non-racist factions to cease what had by then become a veritable civil war, for:

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<sup>231</sup> Kveldulf Hagan Gundarsson, "Race, Inheritance and Ásatrú Today," *Mountain Thunder* 5 (1992), p. 8.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid., pp. 9-10. The fetch is an animal or human spirit or projection which functions in the supernatural realm in service to a single true man or woman throughout his or her life. It is in the operation of seith magic that the fetch becomes a central feature of magical working.

Ásatrú today is a tiny band surrounded on all sides by huge numbers of hostile forces. The only thing that has so far kept the encircling forces from launching a devastating attack is that Ásatrú is so small that most of its potential enemies are unaware of its existence. And we all know that could change at any moment.<sup>233</sup>

This plea however, is not posited merely in terms of political expediency, but again, the textual heritage is presented, coupled with a challenge to follow the true path and to become part not of the past, but of the future--a post-Christian future. Citing perhaps the most oft-quoted text in contemporary Ásatrú, verse 76 of the *Hávamál*: which opens this chapter:

Cattle die, kinsmen die,  
oneself dies the same;  
but words of praise never die  
for those of great renown.

Each of you has been given a chance to be remembered thousands of years from now. In fact, each of you has been given a chance for something far more important than just being remembered. Each of you has been given a chance to change the course of history.<sup>234</sup>

Gamlinginn returns to this subject in 1993 in the pages of *Mountain Thunder*, adopting a tone that more closely approximates Gundarsson's textuality than the more emotional approach of Althing 12's address to the Ásatrú Alliance. Taking here as his text a passage attributed to Odin in the Prose Edda, apparently chosen to support the universal embrace of the gods for the people of Midgard [earth]:<sup>235</sup>

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<sup>233</sup> Gamlinginn, "Speech at Althing 12 of the Ásatrú Alliance (22-24 May 1992)," p. 4.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>235</sup> Gamlinginn, "Race and Religion," *Mountain Thunder* 8 (Spring Equinox 1993), pp. 9-10. Gamlinginn also utilizes an apologetic device has heard in pleas for universal brotherhood in Islamic and Christian cultures throughout the world by asking for textual evidence for the color of the eyes and hair (and by implication, the skin) of the first man and the first woman (Ask and Embla). It is in answer to that question that Christian Identity evolved its doctrine that Adam was white because he could blush, or have 'blood

Then said High One: "It will take a vast amount of knowledge to cover them all, but it is swiftest to say, that most of these names have been given (to him) because, the many different nations speaking different tongues in the world, all wanted to change his name into their own tongue in order to address and pray (to him) for themselves."<sup>236</sup>

With this as a proof text, and the assertion that there must be no place for racism in Ásatrú, Gamlinginn concludes:

In the Modern Age, racists will become more and more isolated from mainstream society (and reality), living lonely, bitter and paranoid lives.

Those of us who have spent our lives fighting both alongside and against many of the world's diverse ethnic groups learn to appreciate the essential similarities of all humans, and to ignore the superficial differences. Every life is filled with combat situations; physical, mental, and spiritual. When facing combat, it is always better to pick allies who share with you the Viking values of Ásatrú than those who share only your skin color.<sup>237</sup>

Not every example of modernist praxis need be so serious, however. Once again, the highly unusual Texas kindred, Eagles' Reaches, provides an example of the lighter side of the Ásatrú movement. Egil's Saga makes mention of an object known as a nidding pole which is erected, adorned with suitable runic inscriptions, for use as an instrument to hex enemies, particularly incoming ships. The nidding pole was apparently rarely used, serving either as something of a deterrent which was not meant to be utilized (as in the more recent Mutually Assured Destruction nuclear doctrine), or simply because it was felt to be unmanly to use magic against a foe whose attack was on a mundane plane and should

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in the face.' For these hermeneutics, see Dan Gayman, "The Holy Bible: The Book of Adam's Race," pamphlet published by the Church of Israel, n.d., p. 1.

<sup>236</sup> Gamlinginn, "Race and Religion," p. 10.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid.

be met on equal terms. In any case, when Ymir Thunarsson apparently became embroiled in a dispute with a Native American shaman resident in the Houston area, Eagles' Reaches erected with all due ceremony a nidding pole with the intent to ease the offending holy man on a permanent journey to another plane of existence.<sup>238</sup>

Finally, there is this. The name of the Ásatrúer who wrote this in a letter several months ago will be withheld, but it offers a wonderful conclusion to this discussion of the modernist reconstruction of the Norse/Germanic tradition. In recognition of the dearth of available female marriage partners in the Ásatrú community, this young Ásatrúer writes:

...I am in the process of seriously courting a beautiful heathen maiden...[thus] in addition to making toasts and wishes at Yule on the subject of how much I wanted to find a compatible woman (still quite rare in Ásatrú), I also promised Frija that I would write a story focusing on her as a votive offering if she would help with this. I am now in the process of writing that story--quite a difficult task as it requires a viewpoint completely different from my own. When I am done, I will take one copy, bless it, and ritually sink it...I am planning to have this done at or before Ostara.<sup>239</sup>

### The Geneticist Reconstruction

The question posed by Ásatrúers and Odinists alike at several points throughout this chapter regarding why the long dormant Northern Way should come to life in this time and this place, may confidently be posited as the proximate genesis for the formulation of a genetic theory of religious transmission. For the adherents of Odinism, and for the most

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<sup>238</sup> This story was gathered from several Ring of Troth and independent Ásatrú sources, all who prefer their name not be included. The difficulty for the Ring of Troth is that Thunarsson is a member of the High Rede (a James Chisholm choice) and this embarrassing incident was publicized by Thunarsson on the E-Mail network which is accessible to all Ásatrúers with a modem and nothing better to do. It is believed in RoT circles however, that Eagles' Reaches, a group which once numbered eleven, but who have lost some 4-6 members, will eventually implode of its own accord. Conversation with DjúpkverkR, 17 April 1993.

<sup>239</sup> Letter from Ásatrú adherent (name withheld), n.d.

extreme racialists in the Ásatrú community, there is little doubt that the transmission of the tradition, and the sole criterion for membership, is genetic inheritance (i.e., race). It is a question that was just as pertinent to Steve McNallen in the earliest days of the Viking Brotherhood or to leaders such as Edred Thorsson today as it is to these racialist adherents. However, where Garman Lord of the Theodish community could assert that the genesis of that tradition was a direct, in person revelation from the gods,<sup>240</sup> and this direct, life changing revelation would be hinted at by several Ásatrúers as well,<sup>241</sup> for the primary

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<sup>240</sup> Gert Æscbeam McQueen, *A Short History of Anglo-Saxon Theodism* (Watertown, NY: THEOD, n.d.), pp. 9-10; Garman Lord, "The Gering Handbook, Volume I," unpublished internal 12 volume compilation of Theodist history, beliefs and rituals, (1992); and letter from Garman Lord, 11 April 1993. The gods in this case were Woden and a silent Frige (Odin and Frigga). Theodism is a close relative of Ásatrú, so close in fact that in terms of the mapping which began this chapter, it would be considered 'suburban' Ásatrú. Theodists worship virtually the same pantheon as Ásatrúers, save from an Anglo-Saxon perspective, and in fact the theology, theodicy and cosmological aspects of the traditions are virtually identical. The primary difference is Theodism's adherence to 'retroheathenry' as opposed to the neoheathenry of most Ásatrúers. Retroheathenry is in this conception the attempt to reconstruct not only the spirit of the Golden Age tradition in the modern world, but as much of its form and substance as possible as well. Thus, Theodist rituals are conducted in Old English or Anglo-Saxon (if possible), and adherents are accorded ranked titles as they proceed through the tradition, with thrallhood at the base (each thrall is sold into a form of spiritual servitude to his or her thane or master), with remaining titles drawn directly from the Anglo-Saxon historical tradition culminating in a king, Garman Lord, the recipient of the original revelation.

So close is the Theodist community to Ásatrú that one of its primary figures, Gert McQueen, sits on the High Rede of the Ring of Troth (a KveldúlfR Gundarsson choice). Gert McQueen was selected on the basis of her high profile activism in support of pagan causes, especially as concern the army chaplaincy corp. and in the prisons, and has become one of the primary lightening rods for internal and external criticism of the High Rede for its failure to meet the Eldership requirements that they are entrusted to administer. Significantly however, none of this criticism seems to have touched on her primary adherence to Theodism rather than Ásatrú, thus graphically demonstrating the compatibility of the traditions. Interview with KveldúlfR Gundarsson, January 1993; Interview with Gert McQueen, 19 January 1993.

<sup>241</sup> Interview with DjúpverkR, 14 October 1992. One well known female Ásatrúer recalls that, as she was breaking up with her boyfriend, she saw Odin standing behind him as they sat together in a pub. She took this as a sign that she must stay with him as a sacrifice to Odin. Name withheld. Finally, KveldúlfR Gundarsson notes that while he and other Ásatrúers have had experience with the gods in the course of mystical practices, and while he recalls that a number of people in Iceland believed in and propitiated the wights, the direct waking experience of the gods is quite rare. Letter from KveldúlfR Gundarsson, 14 April 1993.

theorists of Ásatrú, the question of origin is not so simple, and is for this reason all the more pressing. The primary theory which has evolved from the movement to explain these imponderables is metagenetics.

The idea appears to have begun with Steve McNallen and it appeared in a brief, five page exposition in the original *Runestone* magazine.<sup>242</sup> Since then, the theory has been fleshed out considerably by Edred Thorsson. What is perhaps most remarkable about metagenetic theory is that, despite the high status of its proponents (i.e., McNallen and Thorsson), and particularly in the hands of Thorsson, the considerable intellectual effort that has been lavished on its formulation, it has remarkably few adherents in either Ásatrú or Odinism. Indeed, even those closest to McNallen and Thorsson, Robert Stine and James Chisholm respectively, evince no interest in the idea.<sup>243</sup> Yet despite this isolation, the theory is of considerable interest, and may one day find its way out of the periphery of the Ásatrú and Odinist world. It is certainly well worth considering, and indeed, this theoretical note is a fitting place to end this examination of the Ásatrú and Odinist communities.

What makes metagenetics so difficult for many to accept is its base assumption: that the tradition (read culture) is a matter of genetic inheritance, and that it is for this reason that the compulsion to reawaken the Northern Way has come upon some, but not others. Put another way, the choice of the gods to act through individuals of a particular national and racial stock is less a choice than a necessity, for the gods, and the religious heritage which they personify, never died, but rather have been handed down from generation to

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<sup>242</sup> The article was recently reprinted as "Metagenetics," in *An Odinist Anthology*, pp. 21-25. The article is unsigned, but does carry the preface: "This is the most important article ever to appear in *The Runestone*."

<sup>243</sup> Interview with Robert Stine, 23-24 December 1992.; Interview with James Chisholm, 17 November 1992.



generation--albeit in a dormant state--until such a time as this which they deem propitious for the rebirth of the Norse/Germanic tradition.

Before examining the specifics of metagenetic theory however, it might of value to consider briefly why so few have been drawn to the theory. As explicated by Steve McNallen in *The Runestone*, and as developed in a number of later forums by Edred Thorsson, metagenetics appears to fall into the same middle ground chasm that has bedeviled the old AFA, the Ásatrú Alliance, and to a lesser extent, the Ring of Troth as well. On the one hand, the notion of culture as hereditary violates much of the fundamental liberal dogma of the age, and in less sure hands than those of Thorsson or McNallen, raises the specter of racism, and indeed, the dreaded 'Nazi occultism' epithet which has (fairly or unfairly) become synonymous in Ásatrú circles with Thorsson's adventures in the Order of the Trapezoid. It is simply anathema to the anti-racialists of the Ring of Troth and of much of independent Ásatrú. However, there has been no rush among Odinists or Alliance members to embrace the theory either. The explanation for this seems obvious as well. Metagenetics is no mere racist doctrine. Rather, it depends heavily on psychological theories of cultural transmission--most notably, Jungian archetypes--such central Norse beliefs as reincarnation within family lines, a grab bag of esoteric doctrines drawn from a variety of traditional cultures, and a selective but varied corpus of references from the contemporary social sciences. Put bluntly, these are rather deep intellectual waters for the average Odinist (or Alliance kindred, if truth be told). Thus, at least thus far, metagenetics sinks like a stone between the two warring camps.

Stripped to its essentials, metagenetics, "the science for the next century,"<sup>244</sup> is Jung writ large. Jung's metaphor for the applicability of archetypes to the Weimar era re-emergence of the worship of Wotan<sup>245</sup> sums up the basis of metagenetic theory perfectly:

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<sup>244</sup> "Metagenetics," in *An Odinist Anthology*, p. 21.

<sup>245</sup> McNallen today recalls that the "Wotan" essay was not central to the concept because of its over emphasis on the National Socialist phenomenon in 1930s Germany. "The key

Archetypes are like riverbeds which dry up when the water deserts them, but which it can find again at any time. An archetype is like an old water-course along which the water has flowed for centuries, digging a deep channel for itself. The longer it has flowed in this channel, the more likely it is that sooner or later the water will return to its old bed.<sup>246</sup>

That the genetic descendents of the Norse/Germanic (and Irish) peoples should be the exclusive heirs of the Ásatrú tradition, when placed in the context which Jung provides in Wotan, contains no hint of the racist and exclusivist reputation with which Ásatrú has come to be associated in recent years. As McNallen writes in his introduction to "Metagenetics":

One of the most controversial tenets of Ásatrú is our insistence that ancestry matters--that there are spiritual and metaphysical implications to heredity, and that we are thus not a religion for all of humanity, but rather one that calls only its own. This belief of ours has led to much misunderstanding, and as a result some have attempted to label us as "racist", or have accused us of fronting for totalitarian political forms.

In this article we will discuss, fully and at length, a science for the next century which we have named "metagenetics." For while that science deals with genetics, it also transcends the present boundaries of that discipline and touches on religion, metaphysics, and (among other things) the hereditary nature of Jungian archetypes. The foundations of metagenetics lie not in totalitarian dogma of the 19th and 20th centuries, but rather in intuitive insights as old as our people. It is only in the last decades that experimental evidence has begun to verify these age-old beliefs.<sup>247</sup>

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point is the biological, inheritable nature of archetypes." Interview with Stephen McNallen, 4 January 1993.

<sup>246</sup> Carl G. Jung, "Wotan," in *The Collected Works*, Volume 10, (Princeton: University of Princeton Press, 1964), pp. 179-193. For a complete consideration of archetypes, see Carl Gustav Jung. C. G. Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, R. F. C. Hull, trans., Bollingen Series XX, (New York: Pantheon, 1959).

<sup>247</sup> "Metagenetics," in *An Odinist Anthology*, p. 21.

The evidence verifying these beliefs is certainly eclectic. Quoted among other scientific and religious notables are such diverse scientific luminaries as the Danish brain specialist Dr. N. Jule-Nielson, ESP researcher Dr. J. B. Rhine of Duke University, Dr. Timothy Leary of LSD exploration fame, Dr. Ian Stevenson of the University of Virginia Medical School who authored a highly controversial volume on reincarnation, and Dr. Daniel G. Freedman of the University of Chicago who wrote on ethnic differences among newborns. But it is Jung and his theories of the collective unconscious and its resident archetypes who forms the centerpiece of the presentation:

Most modern students of Jung miss a key fact. Jung stated explicitly that the archetypes were not culturally transmitted but were in fact inherited--that is to say, genetic...

But Jung was not satisfied to make this connection. He went on to say that because of this biological factor there were differences in the collective unconscious of mankind. Boldly, he asserted that, "Thus it is a quite unpardonable mistake to accept the conclusions of a Jewish psychology as generally valid. (This statement must be taken in context. It is not some irrelevant anti-Jewish remark, but instead stems from the growing rift between Jung and his Jewish teacher, Freud.) Nobody would dream of taking a Chinese or Indian psychology as binding on ourselves...with the beginning of racial differentiation, essential differences are developed in the collective psyche as well. For this reason, we cannot transmit the spirit of a foreign religion 'In globo' into our own mentality without sensible injury to the latter."<sup>248</sup>

While scholars of religion would find historical reason to demure from this statement, given the long history of the diffusion of religious creeds across racial and cultural boundaries without noticeable "sensible injury" to the religious belief system,<sup>249</sup> the theory does have an undeniable efficacy in trying to unravel in terms accessible to both

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<sup>248</sup> Ibid., pp. 23-24.

<sup>249</sup> Indeed, to take but one example, the gradual transformation of Buddhism from its Hinayana to its Mahayana form as it diffused eastward not only did not harm the religion, but it unarguably enriched its ethical and cosmological content, and arguably, may have in fact saved the religion from extinction.

religion and twentieth century science the emergence of Ásatrú in the modern world. Further, according to this theory, "if we, as a people, cease to exist, then Ásatrú also dies forever. We are intimately tied up with the fate of our whole people, for Ásatrú is an expression of the the soul of our race."<sup>250</sup> Yet, it is also true that:

This does not mean that we are to behave negatively toward other people who have not harmed us. On the contrary, only by understanding who we are, only by coming from our racial "center," can we interact justly and with wisdom with other people on this planet...<sup>251</sup>

Clearly, this attempt to define a 'middle way' in racial terms has rendered metagenetic theory uniquely uninteresting to adherents on either side of the racist divide in contemporary Ásatrú/Odinism.

Edred Thorsson would flesh out metagenetic theory considerably, most notably in an article in *Idunna*, in a chapter of *A Book of Troth*, and less directly, in a talk given to the Pagan Student Alliance at the University of Texas at Austin.<sup>252</sup> Thorsson, in retrospect, believes that part of the problem with having the concept accepted more widely in the Ásatrú world lies in the word itself, as the term 'genetics' has accrued rather negative connotations "in the pop-intellectual world."<sup>253</sup>

Thorsson anticipates the obvious intellectual criticism that the original "Metagenetics" article would attract, namely, that at root it assumes that in the roughly 800

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<sup>250</sup> "Metagenetics," in *An Odinist Anthology*, p. 25.

<sup>251</sup> Ibid.

<sup>252</sup> Edred Thorsson, "Who Will Build the Hearths of the Troth: Are Racial Considerations Appropriate?," pp.16-24; Edred Thorsson, *A Book of Troth*, pp. 59-62; and Edred Thorsson, "How to be a Heathen: A Methodology for the Awakening of Traditional Systems," talk given to the Pagan Student Alliance at the University of Texas at Austin, 22 November 1991.

<sup>253</sup> Interview with Edred Thorsson, 20 September 1992.

years since the triumph of Christianity, the genetic pool remained essentially pure, or to use the Jungian metaphor, the 'old river bed' would appear to have been fed by too many fresh tributaries to ever hope to resume its old course.<sup>254</sup> Thus, he posits four distinct components of culture which "blended together give us a true picture of any historical society, ancient or modern...1) ethnic culture, 2) ethical culture, 3) material culture, and 4) linguistic culture."<sup>255</sup> Therefore, metagenetic or purely racial aspects of inherited culture account for only one of the four components of culture. Language and material/ethical culture are more than enough to account for an adherent's attraction to Ásatrú, even if s/he is not a direct descendent of the Norse/Germanic blood line.<sup>256</sup> Indeed, it is in Thorsson's exposition linguistic affinity that appears to hold as much importance in the reawakening of the tradition as does racial heritage.<sup>257</sup>

In his *Idunna* article, Thorsson expounds at greater length on the possibilities, and the shortcomings, of metagenetic theory.<sup>258</sup> He points out yet again that race is a 19th century European concept that would have been incomprehensible to the ancestors, as would the dualistic *zeitgeist* which underpins such simplistic divisions of the world into good and bad, light and dark. Thorsson adds to the linguistic and cultural aspects of

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<sup>254</sup> It is a telling measure of the differing approaches of Thorsson and McNallen that where Thorsson would expend considerable intellectual energy on developing metagenetic theory, McNallen would simply dismiss the problem with a shrug, stating "I am not sure just how finely tuned metagenetics is...I can't say I spend a lot of time worrying about it..." Interview with Stephen McNallen, 14 January 1993.

<sup>255</sup> Edred Thorsson, "How to be a Heathen: A Methodology for the Awakening of Traditional Systems," p. 1.

<sup>256</sup> Interview with Edred Thorsson, 20 September 1992.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid.

<sup>258</sup> In fact, the *Idunna* article, Edred Thorsson, "Who Will Build the Hearths of the Troth: Are Racial Considerations Appropriate?" is a reworking of an earlier piece which appeared under the aegis of the Rune Gild as, Edred Thorsson, "Rune-Wisdom and Race," *Runa* 1:2 (Yule 1982).

communal cohesion a graduated series of historically resonant patterns of association, which from macro to micro level are nation, tribe, kindred, family and individual. These break down to three traditional organizational structures which center on the exigencies of the current rebirth of the tradition. The familial tie is genetic, and thus metagenetic writ small. The tribal level is certainly genetic, but given the institutions of alliance, adoption and intermarriage, is a voluntary form of association as well. Finally, there is the associative, which is non-genetic and thus purely voluntary. Properly speaking, the first two levels may be said to be Ásatrú itself, while primary Ásatrú organizations such as the Rune Gild or the Ring of Troth belong to the associative level of organization.<sup>259</sup> Does this observation then, invalidate associative groupings as true Ásatrú organizations? If not, does this openness invalidate metagenetic theory? According to Thorsson:

...The genetic or metagenetic argument is powerful...but it has its definite weaknesses in a revivalist scheme. Principle among these is that carried to its logical conclusion it ends in an equation of 'racial purity' and 'divine contact'. For if we say that someone is in contact with the Germanic gods because they are mainly of Germanic descent, then we could end that because someone else (anyone else) has more Germanic blood then he is automatically more in contact with these archetypes. The ultimate conclusion of such a simplistic and static reasoning would quite obviously be absurd, and what is more, not very convincing. To this important metagenetic, biological line we must add other factors, 1) language, and 2) culture, in order to come up with a complete rationale for German revivalism. Language is a paradigmatic mind-set which encodes the psyche of all who speak it with certain conceptual modes and possibilities. People who have a Germanic language as their Mother Tongue (i.e., English, German, Dutch, or any of the Scandinavian dialects) and who have grown up in cultures formulated by Germanic traditions and thought may also be impressed with the spirit of Ásatrú/Odinism. Culture is a complex sociological mixture of all that goes into the life of a people, and encompasses both the concepts of ancient cultural continuity and environmental influence...<sup>260</sup>

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<sup>259</sup> Edred Thorsson, "Who Will Build the Hearths of the Troth: Are Racial Considerations Appropriate?" p. 22.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid., pp. 22-23.

With this impressively Dumézilian formulation of metagenetics as but one of a three pronged complex of factors (genetics, language and culture), Thorsson is able to reach the reasonable conclusion: "Since race was never a real category of allegiance for the ancients, why should it be one now?"<sup>261</sup> And with this formulation, reached as consequence of having given thought to the skeletal suggestions of Steve McNallen's original "Metagenetics" article, it is possible to posit the importance of the theory, despite its present dearth of adherents.

### Conclusion

Virtually alone among the current crop of reconstructed traditions in the wiccan/neo-pagan world, Odinists and Ásatrúers have pondered--perhaps obsessively--the implications of the reawakening of the old gods. They have stirred before, as Jung pointed out with considerable disquiet in his essay "Wotan," and the outcome for the world was cataclysmic (albeit the gods would seem to have had little enough to do with the unfortunate direction of the National Socialist experiment in Germany). Yet it is this all too recent memory of the exuberance of Germanic racial mysticism which frames the debate on race in Ásatrú and in Odinism today. And it was into this debate that metagenetics was launched in an attempt to explain the emergence of the Northern Way from its long sleep, and perhaps unconsciously, to moderate the excesses of some of the most extreme racialists attracted to the movement--National Socialists, Hitler cultists, prison gangs, Klansmen, outlaw bikers...the list goes on.

That metagenetics as currently formulated appears to fall into the all but empty middle ground between the racist and non-racist Ásatrúers may well, in the short term,

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<sup>261</sup> Ibid., p. 23.

speaking to its irrelevance (and this would appear to be the current consensus in the Ásatrú community). But perhaps McNallen was correct the first time; that metagenetics is a science for the next century. For perhaps it is already the *örlög* [*wyrde* or fate] of the Troth that the gods have foreseen the need for unity if the movement is to survive in the context of an increasingly hostile dominant culture. And just perhaps, as metagenetics matures and develops, it may offer a path toward a middle ground, and thus away from the veritable civil war which from the movement's inception has torn at the vital heart of the reconstruction of the Northern Way.



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REVOLUTIONARY MILLENARIANISM IN THE MODERN WORLD:  
FROM CHRISTIAN IDENTITY TO GUSH EMUNIM

VOLUME TWO

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JEFFREY KAPLAN

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## CHAPTER 5

### THE TWO FACES OF GUSH EMUNIM

#### Introduction

*We can live together, and the country will be open to you, for you to live in, and move about, and acquire holdings. [Genesis 34:10]*

*If thou fearest treachery  
From any group, throw back  
(their covenant) to them (so as  
to be) on equal terms:  
For God loveth not the treacherous.  
[Qur'an, Sura VIII: 58 Anfal (Spoils of War)]*

In the midst of the recent Gulf crisis, there appeared in the *New York Times* a small, little remarked article, only three short paragraphs in length, which announced the decision of the Israeli government Broadcast Authority that henceforth, only the Jewish biblical names of the towns and villages of the West Bank and Gaza Strip will be used on Israel's television and radio.<sup>1</sup> Unremarkable in itself--Israeli media across the ideological spectrum had long since replaced the term West Bank, the more literal Occupied Territories, or the more neutral Territories, with the Jewish biblical terms Judea and Samaria--the decision was nonetheless significant in that it codified in government edict a terminology that two decades ago seemed to most Israelis the province of a fringe group of religious eccentrics. This remaking of the psychological map of Israel to include at minimum the

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<sup>1</sup> "Israeli Networks Ban Arabic Town Names," *New York Times*, 5 September 1990, p. 8.

West Bank may well prove to be the lasting achievement of the national religious generation of Israelis, spearheaded by the Gush Emunim, the Bloc of the Faithful.<sup>2</sup>

To the outside observer, the adherents of Gush Emunim's ideology today may seem as esoteric as did that first tiny band of followers of Rabbi Moshe Levinger who in 1968 'settled' Faiz Kawazme's Park Hotel in Hebron, proclaiming their intention to by themselves reestablish the Jewish presence in that city that had been severed by the 1929 riots which left some 65 Jews dead in Hebron alone.<sup>3</sup> The truth is however, that far from a tiny band of religious fanatics on the fringes of Israeli society, Gush Emunim represents to some extent a sizeable segment of Israeli opinion<sup>4</sup>, a fact which the adherents themselves had only with the intifada come to realize.<sup>5</sup> To understand why this should be so, it is necessary grasp two recurrent patterns of the Jewish historical and religious experience.

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<sup>2</sup> This biblicization is by no means restricted to Israel, nor is the integration of the West Bank into a vital, if de facto part of Israel based on a scriptural premise alone. The American media, often quoting Israeli sources, have commonly used the terms Judea and Samaria, albeit while noting that the terms denote the biblical names of the West Bank, while agencies of the U.S. government have recently adopted in toto the Israeli terminology. See "Judea and Samaria-on the CIA Map," *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 20 May 1989, p. 8. Further, while the security argument for holding the West Bank has been considerably weakened by the intifada, there is a growing recognition in Israeli academic and government circles that the resources of the West Bank may hold the key to Israel's long-term economic viability. In a remarkable full page advertisement paid for by the Israeli Department of Agriculture, the new Minister of Agriculture Rafi Eitan, an enigmatic former general and one man Knesset faction who is accurately described by one Israeli academic as a kind of Israeli Dr. Strangelove figure, made public these calculations with the frank, if impolitic, assertion that whatever the ultimate political fate of the West Bank, Israel must retain the area's water table to survive. See *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 18 August 1990, p. 7. The description of Gen. Eitan is in Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism: The Bloc of the Faithful in Israel (Gush Emunim)," in *Fundamentalism Observed*.

<sup>3</sup> See for example. "The 20-year 'weekend'," *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 30 May 1988, p. 8.

<sup>4</sup> Ehud Sprinzak, "Gush Emunim: The Tip of the Iceberg," *Jerusalem Quarterly* 21 (Fall 1981), and Idem., "The Iceberg Model of Political Extremism," in David Newman, ed., *The Impact of Gush Emunim* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985).

<sup>5</sup> See for example. "Settlers learning to live in 'Indian territory'," *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 24 September 1988, p. 1.

The one is textual, a biblical passage that may well serve as a metaphor for the modern history of the Israeli state,<sup>6</sup> and the other from the Aggadat, the oral legends of the Jewish people as preserved in the Talmud and the Midrash.<sup>7</sup> Both as we shall see, are prominent in the pronouncements of the members of Gush Emunim.

The biblical passage, Genesis 34, may well serve future historians as the definitive model of Israeli politics, as those politics touch on the area of land and conquest. For it is in this passage that we can most clearly see the interplay of forces, those of moderation, caution and conciliation versus those of precipitous action, vengeance and honor, and at root, of the imperative to reclaim in full a patrimony divinely granted. And today, as in the world of the patriarches, such a contest is inherently unequal. For it is the action of the few which, for the people of Israel no less than those of the nations, speaks louder than the words of the leaders. Listen then, to the clarity and power of this earliest of formulations of the zero-sum nature of the conflict over the Land of Palestine:

Dinah, who was Jacob's daughter by Leah, went out to visit some of the women of that region.

Shechem, son of Hamor the Hivite, headman of the region, saw her, seized her, and forced her to sleep with him.

He was captivated by Dinah, daughter of Jacob; he fell in love with the girl and tried to win her heart.

Accordingly, Shechem said to his father Hamor, 'Get me this girl, I want to marry her'.

Meanwhile, Jacob heard how his daughter Dinah had been dishonored, but since his sons were out in the countryside with his livestock, Jacob said nothing until they came back.

Hamor father of Shechem was visiting Jacob to discuss the matter with him, when Jacob's sons returned from the countryside and heard the news;

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<sup>6</sup> The importance of this passage to Gush Emunim, and to the wider religious sector of Israeli society, may be seen in a number of sources. For example, Luke Lea, "The Torah and the West Bank," *Judaism* 3 (Summer, 1987), pp. 270-271. That this passage is only one among many posited as key by Gush Emunim may be seen in Micheal Zimmerman, "The Biblical Roots of Elon Moreh," *The American Zionist* 3 (April-May, 1980), pp. 16-18.

<sup>7</sup> Raphael Patai, *The Messiah Texts* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1979), p. xv. For a good, basic introduction to the textual heritage of Judaism, see Robert M. Seltzer, *Jewish People, Jewish Thought*, pp. 112-161 and 260-309.

the men were outraged and infuriated that Shechem had insulted Israel by sleeping with Jacob's daughter—a thing totally unacceptable.

Hamor reasoned with them as follows, 'My son Shechem's heart is set on your daughter, please allow her to marry him.

Intermarry with us; give us your daughters and take our daughters for yourselves.

We can live together, and the country will be open to you, for you to live in, and move about, and acquire holdings'.

Then Shechem addressed the girl's father and brothers, 'Grant me this favor, and I will give you whatever you ask.

Demand as high a bride-price from me as you please, and I will pay as much as you ask. Only let me marry the girl'.

Jacob's sons gave Shechem and his father Hamor a crafty answer, speaking as they did because he had dishonored their sister Dinah.

'we cannot do this,' said to them. 'To give our sister to an uncircumcised man would be a disgrace for us.

We can only agree on one condition: that you become like us by circumcising all your males.

Then we will give you our daughters, taking yours to ourselves; and we will stay with you to make one nation.

But if you will not agree to our terms about being circumcised, we shall take our daughters and go'.

Hamor and Shechem son of Hamor were pleased with what they heard.

The young man did not hesitate about doing this, for he was deeply in love with Jacob's daughter. Moreover, he was the most respected member of his entire family.

Hamor and his son Shechem went to the gate of their town and spoke to their fellow-townsmen as follows,

These men are friendly; let them settle in the region and move about freely in it; there is plenty of room here for them; we shall marry their daughters and give our daughters to them.

But these men will agree to settle with us and become a single nation only on this condition: that all our males be circumcised like them.

Will not the livestock they own, all their animals, become ours? Then let us give our assent to this, so that they can settle with us'.

All the citizens of the town agreed to the proposal made by Hamor and his son Shechem, and all the males were circumcised.

Now on the third day, when the men were still in pain, Jacob's two sons, Simeon and Levi, each took his sword and advanced unopposed against the town and slaughtered all the males.

They killed Hamor and his son Shechem with the sword, removed Dinah from Shechem's house and came away.

When Jacob's other sons came on the slain, they pillaged the town in reprisal for the dishonoring of their sister.

They seized their flocks, cattle, donkeys, everything else in the town and the countryside,

and all their possessions. They took all their children and wives captive and looted everything to be found in the houses.

Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, 'You have done me an ill turn by bringing me into a bad odor with all the people of the region, the Canaanites and the Perizzites. I have few men, whereas they will unite against me to defeat me and destroy me and my family'.

They retorted, 'Should our sister be treated as a whore?'<sup>8</sup>

If Genesis 34 represents a textual base for the interpretation of the actions of the modern day Gush Emunim, there remains a deeper, more elastic set of traditions revered by the Gush and their severest Israeli critics alike: the redemptive power of the messianic figure in Jewish eschatology. Here we are introduced to the twin figures of the Jewish messiahs, the precursor of Redemption, the Messiah Ben Joseph, and the bringer of Redemption, the Messiah Ben David. The tale is preserved in numerous permutations throughout the non-canonical texts, and became central to Jewish belief only with the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 A.D. and the subsequent Exile.<sup>9</sup> In essence, this tradition holds that, at the time of greatest need, God will send a leader, Messiah Ben Joseph, to gather the people of Israel and to lead the battle against the enemies of the Jewish people, the Jewish antichrist figure Armilus, the hordes of Gog and Magog, and the nations of the world. Yet Ben Joseph, for all his prowess, is doomed to defeat, his corpse left unburied, although miraculously uncorrupted in the dust for forty days, when it will be brought back to life by Messiah Ben David. For Messiah Ben David, in Jewish eschatological thought, has ever been present in the world, alone and in agony, awaiting

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<sup>8</sup> *The New Jerusalem Bible* (New York: Doubleday, 1985), pp. 58-59. It is ironic to note that Dinah, known in Arabic as al-Khadra, was venerated as a saint by Palestinian Arabs. See Raphael Patai, *The Seed of Abraham* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976), p. 174, quoting Taufik Canaan, *Mohammadan Saints* (1927). Perhaps not so surprising given that Dinah throughout her ordeal seems never to have been asked for her view, and spends her time with Jacob in her quarters, the Arabic root *kh-d-r* of al-Khadara translates in verbal form as 'to confine to women's quarters' and 'keep in seclusion', or in other forms such associated concepts as to: 'numb,' 'stupify,' 'deprive of sensation,' 'narcotize,' and to 'become limp or paralyzed.' Hans Wehr, *Arabic-English Dictionary*, edited by J. M. Cowan, (Ithaca, New York: Spoken Language Services, 1976), p. 228.

<sup>9</sup> Patai, *The Messiah Texts*, p. xxvi; R. J. Zwi Werblowski, "Messianism," In Arthur A. Cohen and Paul Mendes-Flohr, *Contemporary Jewish Religious Thought*, p. 598.

God's leave to reveal himself and lead his long suffering people to Final Redemption. And Final vengeance.<sup>10</sup>

The shape of the world after the victory of Messiah Ben David is left unclear, subject to ever more extravagant speculation. What concerns us here however, is less the content of the messianic era than the pattern of the coming of the messiahs themselves. For as surely as Messiah Ben David will be sent by God to seize the torch of redemption from the hand of the fallen Messiah Ben Joseph, so too, according to Gush Emunim, has the religious Zionism to which the Movement adheres arrived to take up the spark of Jewish redemption from the lifeless corpse of secular Zionism.<sup>11</sup> Further, the same pattern may be seen in the transition from the innovative theology of the late Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, the father of modern religious Zionism, to the far more narrowly based teachings of his son, Zvi Yehuda, the teacher of the core cadres of Gush Emunim.

In keeping with this two-part formulation, this chapter will examine two distinct sets of issues. The first part will trace in a linear fashion the history of the Movement within the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict on the West Bank<sup>12</sup> and within the politics of Israel itself. It will concentrate as well on the activities of the Jewish Underground, and will examine the initial impact of the Palestinian intifada on the Movement.

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<sup>10</sup> Patai, *The Messiah Texts*, is the best source for the many traditions associated with the messianic legendary cycle.

<sup>11</sup> The imagery of this sentence is adapted from the writings of the first Chief Ashkenazi Rabbi of mandatory Palestine, Abraham Isaac Kook. See Ben Zion Bokser, trans. and ed., *Abraham Isaac Kook*. For the centrality of the Ben Joseph/Ben David imagery to Gush Emunim, see Rabbi Moshe Levinger, "From Messiah-Son-of-Joseph to Messiah-Son-of David," *New Outlook*.

<sup>12</sup> The West Bank is chosen for its religious and historical centrality to Islam, Judaism, and Christianity. To simplify the analysis, Jerusalem is included within the term West Bank. It should be noted that Jewish settlements affiliated with Amana, the settlement organization identified closely with Gush Emunim exist in both the Golan Heights, unilaterally annexed by Israel, and in the Gaza Strip. Both of these areas however, are beyond the purview of this paper.

Section Two of this chapter will utilize Gush Emunim as a case study in an effort to separate, for the purposes of this dissertation, the often overlapping concepts of religious fundamentalism and millenarianism/messianism. In particular, this section will attempt to locate, between messianism and fundamentalism, the soul of the movement.

A final methodological note is in order. Gush Emunim as an organized entity was born in 1974 at a series of meetings at the Kfar Etzion settlement in the West Bank. However, throughout this chapter, settlement efforts or other activities of core activists of GE from 1967-1974 have been referred to as Gush Emunim actions. This is intended as a convenient shorthand so as to avoid such clumsy constructions as 'proto Gush Emunim' or worse, the use of adjectives such as 'embryonic' or 'nascent'.

## Part I

### The History Of Gush Emunim: A Crisis Approach

"...The events [the Gulf crisis] do not have to disturb the spiritual and physical peace of a single Jew, because they are a preparation and preface for the actual coming of the Messiah."<sup>13</sup>

"...the significance of the holiness of the Land is indeed the the concept of sanctity in the Jewish world...the Land cannot suffer bad deeds, since its very essence is holy. Therefore, whoever does not adjust to its (the Lands') character, is pushed away from before it." Rabbi Yochanon Freid<sup>14</sup>

"Lots of people find that for the price of a little apartment in Tel Aviv they can get a villa and a mortgage here...The immigration [of Russian Jews] maybe helped with this...People are coming because there's more safety

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<sup>13</sup> "Schneerson: 'Have no fear, Gulf crisis heralds Messiah'," *Jerusalem Post International edition*, 1 September 1990, p. 6.

<sup>14</sup> Yosseph Shilhav, "Interpretation and Misinterpretation of Jewish Territorialism," in David Newman, ed., *The Impact of Gush Emunim*, p. 122, quoting from an interview first published in Tzvi Ra'anani, *Gush Emunim* (Tel Aviv: Hapoalim Books, 1980, Hebrew), p. 181 and 183.



here, and they know we'll be here forever." Shlomo Katan, mayor of Alfe Menashe<sup>15</sup>

Israel is a society which takes on life and vibrancy only in conditions of crisis. It lives and breathes crisis, with the twin visions of apocalypse and messianic redemption never far from the surface of daily life. Its political system, based as it currently is on shifting and inherently unstable coalitions of small, interest group-based political parties, are brought together in a crisis atmosphere of closed door negotiation and may be shattered in times of calm, when one interest group or another may reliably be counted upon to create, seemingly from the ether, a coalition crisis based either on an abstract point of religion or ideology, or as a ploy to siphon funds from the public trough to the coffers of the particular constituency whose infinitesimal strength in the Knesset is needed to keep the coalition in power. Such cavalier management of the economy--itself an odd mixture of free market zeal, a captive export market in the Occupied Territories, and a charitable trust in which U. S. economic aid and fundraising from diaspora Jewry--is disbursed by quasi-governmental agencies and ministries control of which is apportioned on the basis of the exigencies of the ongoing coalition crisis. The aim of this budget process seems to be to cushion politically powerful interest groups ranging from the Kibbutz Movement to the Heredim to the settlement movement to the entrepreneurs of Israeli capitalism, from the political and economic costs of failure. This system too guarantees a permanent economic crisis, with government shortfalls and costly and inefficient programs, not the least of which is the massive infrastructure put in place on the West Bank for the apparent benefit of a small number of settlers, undertaken in the firm conviction that the state itself, like its industries and programs, will not be allowed to fail.

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<sup>15</sup> "For Israelis, Appeal of Occupied Territories Grows," *New York Times*, 25 September 1990, p. 6.

Like the state with which it wholly identifies, Gush Emunim, the Bloc of the Faithful, was born of a perceived crisis, taking on a specific character in relation to the wider set of crises which beset Israeli society in the last quarter century. And it will be these perceived crises which, to borrow a Nixonian methodology, will provide a convenient framework for this examination of the historical development of the Movement.

### The First Crisis: The Formation of Gush Emunim 1948-1967

The core leadership of Gush Emunim, today well into middle age, were born into an atmosphere of crisis which, at the time, went unperceived by the average Israeli. For the 'knitted skullcap' minority of religious Zionists however, there existed a sense of profound crisis which transcended their own marginalization in the decidedly secular, even anti-religious, society of Israel in the years 1948-1967.<sup>16</sup> These crises, that of secular vs. religious Zionism and of an Israeli nationhood stripped of its messianic dimension, were first and best addressed by Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook. Envisioning a 'Sacred Spark', that is, a spirit of the Divine, and of prophesy, as inherent in every Jew, Rabbi Kook offered a complex doctrine whereby, as Messiah Ben Joseph would give way inexorably to Messiah Ben David, the husk of secularity would inevitably fall away from Zionism, leaving in this, the Messianic era of redemption, a religious Zionism.<sup>17</sup> In the self-view of the young national religious generation in the newly constituted religious educational

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<sup>16</sup> Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism: The Bloc of the Faithful in Israel (Gush Emunim)," Gideon Aran, "A Mystic-Messianic Interpretation of Modern Israeli History: The Six Day War as a Key Event in the Development of the Original Religious Culture of Gush Emunim," pp. 265-266, 271-272; and Uriel Tal, "The Symbolic and the Sacred," *Oz VeShalom* 7-8 (Summer/Fall 1986), pp. 38-39.

<sup>17</sup> Ben Zion Bokser, trans. and ed. *Abraham Isaac Kook*. There are numerous sources attesting to the importance of Rabbi Kook's thought to Gush Emunim. For a very brief view of the major tenets of Rabbi Kook's doctrine as applied to Gush Emunim, see Lilly Weissbrod., "Gush Emunim Ideology--From Religious Doctrine to Political Action," *Middle Eastern Studies* 18 (July, 1982), pp. 266-271.

stream and the high school yeshivas, they would constitute the vanguard of this new Zionism.<sup>18</sup>

The organizational roots of Gush Emunim can be traced to an organization that was in fact little more a boys club in the 1950s, *Gahalet*, 'the Embers' in literal Hebrew, but also an acronym for 'nucleus of Torah-Learning Pioneers'.<sup>19</sup> Begun as an organization of 13 to 15 year old boys at the Orthodox boarding school at Kfar Haroeh headed by Rabbi Moshe Zvi Neria, *Gahalet* may be seen as an expression of the confusion and resentment felt throughout the Orthodox camp as a result first of the secular Zionists' success in founding the state and in the 1948 war, and more immediately, of the perceived attacks on the religious community coming from secular quarters which by 1951 led to an atmosphere described at the time by the Orthodox as an "anti-religious war."<sup>20</sup> It was through *Gahalet* that the ideology of Gush Emunim would take shape.

The essence of this ideology was, as the acronym *Gahalet* implies, an attempt to appropriate from the secular Zionists the *halutziut* (roughly translated as the pioneering spirit), and to fuse this quality with the values of the traditional yeshiva world of religious scholarship. With this ideological foundation, and with that intense in-group solidarity (read exclusiveness) natural to adolescents in so closed an environment, the group grew from a core of three to almost one hundred in four years. Over that time the group's ideology would evolve from an emphasis on "Torah and labor" to an exclusive emphasis on Torah study as an end in itself, beginning a withdrawal from the perceived hostility of

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<sup>18</sup> Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism: The Bloc of the Faithful in Israel (Gush Emunim)."

<sup>19</sup> The sole source on *Gahalet* is Gideon Aran, "From Religious Zionism to Zionist Religion: The Roots of Gush Emunim," in Peter Y. Medding, *Studies in Contemporary Jewry II* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1986). All material in this section relating to *Gahalet* is drawn from this source.

<sup>20</sup> Gideon Aran, "From Religious Zionism to Zionist Religion: The Roots of Gush Emunim," p. 129.

secular Israeli society. Yet this withdrawal would not culminate in the 'heredization' of the movement. Rather, in Gahalet's crowning achievement, the organization through the auspices of the National Religious Party negotiated successfully with the Israeli government to permit an option for graduating B'nai Akiva members [the Orthodox youth movement] to delay military service in favor of higher religious study in special institutions which would develop into the hesder yeshiva system, combining yeshiva study with the obligation for military service.<sup>21</sup> With this final success, the Gahalet organization was dissolved by the B'nai Akiva authorities as both too militant and, more importantly, too exclusivist. Upon graduation, some of this core group would go on to found their own yeshiva, at Kerem Beyavneh. However, most of the core group would remain inseparable, and together would seek an amenable established yeshiva. Their choice would prove fateful: Yeshiva Merkaz Herav, under the tutelage of Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Hachohen Kook, the rather nondescript son of the great chief rabbi of Palestine, Abraham Isaac Kook.

Rabbi Kook, as we have noted, held that in this great mission of global redemption, even the atheistic secular Zionists held within them the 'Sacred Spark', the spirit of God, in that redemption, albeit without their conscious knowledge, was being accomplished through them. In the end, Rabbi Kook was certain, they would become aware of this sacredness, and thus leave behind the partial truths of secular Zionism as a child outgrows the shoes in which he has taken his first, halting steps. Of course, this did not come about. Rabbi Kook could never overcome the indifference of the secular Israeli majority, and at the same time, he could never convince the Heredi camp of the reality of Israel's redemption. Nor would he succeed in reconciling many of the Heredim to the existence of the 'heretic' state, convinced as they are that Israel's existence is actively hindering the coming of the promised messiah.

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<sup>21</sup> For a practical introduction to the hesder yeshiva system today, see "Officers and Scholars," *Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 25 August 1990, p. 13.

With the passing of the elder Rabbi Kook in 1935, Yeshiva Merkaz Herav under his son R. Zvi Yehuda Hachohen Kook lost what little cachet it had through the fame of the elder Rabbi. And with the outbreak of the 1948 war, hailed by Israelis as the War of Independence, Mercaz Herav under Zvi Yehuda lost most of its remaining students as well. Urged by their rabbi to leave the confines of the yeshiva and take up arms for the emergent state of Israel, most never returned. Clearly, this was more a function of the allure of the triumphant secular Israeli spirit than a mere function of battlefield attrition. Thus it is no surprise that for the younger Rabbi Kook, the true crises of secular Zionism and Israeli nationhood is traced not to the 1948 War of Independence, but to the victory of 1967, which, he held, marks the true beginning, the year 0, of the Age of Redemption.<sup>22</sup>

So complete was its eclipse in Orthodox circles, so the story goes, that when in the 1960s the small band of former Gahalet members stumbled onto the old Rav's house on Kook street in Jerusalem, they had no knowledge of either Rabbi Kook's thought, nor of the yeshiva under his son. Indeed, so forgotten was Mercaz Herav, that the rabbi was often unable to assemble a *minyan* [a quorum of 10 male adults] for daily prayers.<sup>23</sup> Yet it did not take much more than a preliminary meeting to convince the young Gahalet veterans that in the younger Kook, never much respected in Orthodox educational circles and ignored by the secular world, they had found a true guru. For in the younger Kook, the immense idealism and inclusiveness of the elder Kook's thought had been reduced to an intense, highly emotional, sense of messianic mission.<sup>24</sup> For the younger Kook, the

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<sup>22</sup> See Moshe Kohn, "The roots go back to the 'fifties," *The Jerusalem Post*, 6 August 1976, p. 5; Gideon Aran, "A Mystic-Messianic Interpretation of Modern Israeli History: The Six Day War as a Key Event in the Development of the Original Religious Culture of Gush Emunim," p. 264.

<sup>23</sup> Moshe Kohn, "The roots go back to the 'fifties," p. 5

<sup>24</sup> For the thought of the younger Kook, see HaRav Tzvi Yehuda HaCohen Kook, *Torat Eretz Yisrael*. Cf. Eliezer Don-Yehiya, "Messianic Theology and Radical Politics: Rav Kook, Father and Son, and Their Disciples," *Morasha 2* (Spring/Summer 1988); Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism: The Bloc of the Faithful in Israel (Gush

Messianic Age would become a reality only through the reclaiming of the entire patrimony of biblical Israel (liberally interpreted). In essence, the younger Kook was offering an important revision of his father's thought in that, far from waiting passively for God's pleasure in deciding the time and modality of the End, the long-tarrying Messiah, envisioned as a process rather than necessarily an individual, could be forced. All that was needed is for the biblical patrimony to be recovered and the Temple to be rebuilt and reconsecrated. It was this ideological appeal, combined with the group cohesiveness formed in Gahalet, that would give birth to both the fundamentalist and the messianic strains of religious Zionism embodied in Gush Emunim. Yet had it not been for the stunning impact of outside events-events interpreted as miraculous even by the most secular quarters of Israeli society-this explosive ideology would have remained a mere theoretical construct, safely contained within the confines of the yeshiva world. But with the victory of 1967 came the confirmation for the 'Kookist' students of the inherent rightness of their theories, and indeed, of a visible and unambiguous manifestation of the Will of God.

### The Second Crisis: The Victory of 1967

The stunning victory of the Six Day War in June, 1967, caught most Israelis unawares. So complete was this triumph that it was only to be expected that belligerents on both sides of the battle lines would turn to God for an understanding of the events which transformed the Middle Eastern political landscape.<sup>25</sup> For a broad swath of the Israeli society, determinedly secular in outlook, this victory occasioned considerable soul-

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Emunim"); Charles S. Liebman and Eliezer Don-Yehiya, *Civil Religion in Israel*, pp. 195-199; and Uriel Tal, "The Symbolic and the Sacred."

<sup>25</sup> For the most evocative English language account of the ferment in the Arab intellectual universe resulting from this conflict, see Fuad Ajami, *The Arab Predicament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

searching, with a brief religious surge blending inextricably with the strains of messianism inherent in Zionism<sup>26</sup> and the *realpolitik* of the national security mindset to form an organized movement linking religious and secular sectors of the Israeli *intelligentsia* into an influential, if short-lived, organization dedicated to retaining the captured lands of the West Bank, Gaza and the Golan: The Land of Israel Movement.

At the same time, the knitted skullcap generation of religious Zionists emerged, easily recognizable, for the first time on the national stage via the lens of the Israeli media as they stood in the forefront of the battle to capture the Old City of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount. At this moment of seemingly unlimited possibilities for religious Zionism, with the fabled Jewish sites Hebron and Bethlehem and Nablus no less than Jerusalem<sup>27</sup> suddenly open to them, only the students of Mercaz Herav yeshiva possessed a vision of precisely how these possibilities could be realized. For now, in addition to the teachings of the rabbis Kook, they had, they were certain, an authentic prophesy, rendered by a divinely inspired prophet to guide their actions.

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<sup>26</sup> Sources for the messianic dimension of Zionism include Aharon Agus, *The Binding of Isaac and Messiah* (Albany, N.Y.: SUNY Press, 1988), and Stephen Sharot, *Messianism, Mysticism and Magic* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina University Press, 1982). On the disappointment of 1840 when a 'New Yishuv' dispatched by the Gaon of Villna to prepare for the expected arrival in that year of the Messiah found their vigil to be in vain, may be found in Arie Morganstern, "Messianic Concepts and Settlement in the Land of Israel," in Richard I. Cohen, ed., *Vision and Conflict in the Holy Land* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985).

<sup>27</sup> In fact, with the exception of post-1929 Hebron, when some 75 members of the Jewish Yishuv centered around a Lithuanian yeshiva were killed and the Islamic Waqf authorities forbade Jews from climbing above the seventh step of the Mosque of al-Khalil (Cave of Machpela), and of the Western Wall in divided Jerusalem, many of these sites were something less than hermetically sealed. Nonetheless, with 1967, all fell to Israeli control, subject to the Status Quo agreement negotiated between the Israeli government and Waqf officials. See Moshe Dayan, *Story of My Life* (London: Sphere Books Ltd., 1976), for an account of these events. On the Jewish religious sites of Jerusalem and the West Bank, and of the legendary accretions attached to them, see Zev Vilnay, *Legends of Jerusalem* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1973) and Idem, *Legends of Judea and Samaria* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1975).

It was in the contrast of these two movements, the Land of Israel Movement (LIM) and the young Kookists of Mercaz Herav, that the crisis of 1967 and its aftermath may best be understood. For here again we see clearly the interplay of the two central motifs of this chapter, the Messiahs Ben Joseph and Ben David and the territorial imperative of Genesis 34. And it is in this period, in the years 1967-1973, that the political and the organizational character of Gush Emunim would be forged.

The Land of Israel Movement, born of the Six Day War, appears the ideal candidate to play the Messiah Ben Joseph to Gush Emunim's Ben David. Comprised of intellectuals and academics, many from such Israeli leftist parties as the kibbutz-based Mapai, and with a vociferous contingent from military and intelligence circles best exemplified by Isser Herel, the first chief of the modern Mossad, the LIM would never leave the comfortable salons of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv to undertake the difficult life of pioneer settlement. Yet the group's importance should not be overlooked, for not only did the LIM first bring together the coalition which would paralyze successive Israeli governments in the face of repeated illegal settlement attempts,<sup>28</sup> but as would the Messiah Ben Joseph of Jewish eschatology, the LIM prepared the way for the emergence of the Gush through effective propagandizing in the secular idiom which to this day eludes the yeshiva trained leaders of Gush Emunim.<sup>29</sup> Such is the importance of the Land of Israel Movement to the history of

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<sup>28</sup> How widespread this coalition is even today is a matter of some debate. Dr. Ehud Sprinzak makes a convincing case that Gush Emunim is but the tip of the iceberg of the Israeli constituency for holding on to the occupied lands. See Ehud Sprinzak. "The Iceberg Model of Political Extremism." In David Newman, ed. *The Impact of Gush Emunim*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985) and Ehud Sprinzak. "Gush Emunim: The Tip of the Iceberg." *Jerusalem Quarterly* 21, (Fall, 1981).

<sup>29</sup> This is not to say that there was no cross-membership between GE and the LIM in the latter organization's waning days of the early 1970s. Although not a large scale phenomenon, the early Gush did make significant efforts to broaden their appeal to secular sectors of Israeli society, and the LIM was the natural place to begin. See Ehud Sprinzak, "The Emergence of the Radical Right," *Comparative Politics* 21 (1989), p. 173.



Gush Emunim, that a closer look at the group is warranted, and no better introduction may be offered than in the Movement's founding manifesto:

Zahal's [Israel Defense Forces] victory in the Six Day War placed the people and the state within a new and fateful period. The whole of Eretz Yisrael is now in the hands of the Jewish people, and just as we are not allowed to give up the *State of Israel*, so we are ordered to keep what we received there from *Eretz Yisrael*. (italics in original)

We are bound to be loyal to the entirety of our country--for the sake of the people's past as well as its future, and no government in Israel is entitled to give up this entirety, which represents the inherent and inalienable right of our people from the beginnings of its history.

Our present boundaries are a guarantee of security and peace and open up unprecedented vistas of national material and spiritual consolidation. Within these boundaries, equality and freedom, the fundamental tenets of the State of Israel, shall be the share of all citizens without discrimination.

The two prime endeavors on which our future existence depends are immigration and settlement. Only by means of great influx of new immigrants from all parts of the Diaspora can we hope to build up and establish the Land of Israel as a unified national entity. Let us regard the tasks and responsibilities of this hour as a challenge to us all, and as a call to a new awakening of endeavor on behalf of the people of Israel and its land...<sup>30</sup>

In total, there were 75 signers, representing every sector of Israeli life; the arts, political leaders from left to right, military officers and academics. Reasons for the attraction of the movement included religious faith, nationalism, security interests,

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<sup>30</sup> Rael Jean Isaac, *Israel Divided: Ideological Politics in the Jewish State* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), p. 165. Most notable among the numerous signers were Isser Harel; Poet Uri Zvi Greenberg [Greenberg's poetry was influential with young GE activists, see pp. 64-65 and Yaacov Shavit, "Uri Zvi Greenberg: Conservative Revolution and National Messianism," *Jerusalem Quarterly* 48 (Fall, 1988)]; Shmuel Yoseph Agnon, first Israeli Nobel Prize winner for literature; Dr. Benjamin Halevi, former member of Israeli Supreme Court; Prof. Eri Jabotinski- son of Vladimir Jabotinski, founder of Zionist revisionism; Eliezer Livni, the LIM ideologue and Mapai MP who underwent a conversion experience as a result of 1967 (Isaac, *Israel Divided*, p. 182, n.3); Rabbi Zvi Neriah, head of B'nai Akiva Youth Movement, home of the core Gush Emunim leadership and National Religious Party MP; Yoseph Yoel Rivlin, noted Islamic scholar at Hebrew University who translated the Qu'ran into Hebrew; Moshe Shamir, writer, founding member and one of primary LIM leaders; Zvi Shuloah, Labor Party Central Comm., editor of *Zot Haaretz* [This is the Land] the LIM newsletter; Joseph Tebenkin, a Kibbutznik who was the youngest general in the 1948 war; and Dr. Zeev Vilnay, historian of places in Palestine.

romanticism, and Zionist motivations of various permutations. Further, given the complexity and sophistication of the group, motivations could be discerned in complex clusters, with religion, Zionism, naive romanticism and military calculation all detectable to some degree in the thinking of individual members. Nevertheless, there are three identifiable component blocs which constituted the LIM: former underground members (Irgun, Lehi, etc.), religious leaders, and the so-called Canaanites.<sup>31</sup> While the first two groups are self evident, the latter deserves some further attention.

The Canaanites were a small group of intellectuals seeking to forge a non-Jewish Israeli national identity in partnership with Arabs 'freed' of pan-Arabism. Their plan, such as it was, envisioned two successive stages: A 'Covenant of Canaan' to include Lebanese Maronites, Druze and Beduins, leading to the second stage: Uniting all peoples in the "land of the Euphrates" into a kind of "Hebrew United States" from the Tigris to the Suez Canal! While Canaanites accepted the tactical possibility of working with Zionists in the LIM to realize this long term strategy, the religious and security components of the organization could not foresee the possibility of working with them. Thus, the Canaanites in the end refused to sign the manifesto, while others in LIM would not stay in same movement with the Canaanites, leaving the ever-practical Isser Harel, then First Chairman of the Executive, to suggest splitting the group into the LIM and the Committee of Action for Retaining the Territories, with cross-membership forbidden.<sup>32</sup>

Little wonder that a movement so riven with contradictions would not move from the realm of impassioned debate into the sphere of action. Israel Eldad put this dilemma succinctly:

So in that case, if we are not supposed to be a party or an opposition, what are we supposed to do? Hold prayer sessions? Rallies? No, they said, be

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 49.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., pp. 52-54.

'a moral force'. Make the Movement a political force through...interceders. Go from minister to minister in the government; tell them to make a settlement here or there. I don't agree. It hasn't worked. <sup>33</sup>

Yet the Movement was influential to the extent that its membership represented a broad cross-section of the Israeli elite. It generated, in the early days of settlement, the 1968 'occupation' of the Park Hotel in Hebron, and the 'reclamation' of Kfar Etzion, a powerful source of parliamentary influence, of propaganda, and not the least important, of funding.<sup>34</sup> All three functions would, upon its official formation in 1974, be put at the service of Gush Emunim.

The reaction of the young students of Mercaz Herav to the victory of 1967 was no less electric than was that of the LIM. Many had already taken the path of political activism, forming in the years 1963-1964 a Youth Faction of the National Religious Party.<sup>35</sup> How important this early activism was is often lost on those outside the core leadership of the Movement:

We [the Youth Faction] continued to press, and a couple of weeks later Golda agreed to the NRP demand that new elections would be called before any decision was made on returning any part of Judea and Samaria. We consider this our great achievement: that the NRP entered the government on the promise that there would be no territorial decision without a referendum. Though we do not believe that even a referendum has the right to decide this issue. Eretz Yisrael belongs to the entire Jewish people, including the future generations of Jews. <sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., pp. 55-56, from interview with author, 3/5/1970.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., pp. 56-58. Moshe Kohn, "Redemption or Disaster?" *The Jerusalem Post Magazine*, 30 July 1976, p. 6.

<sup>35</sup> Gideon Aran, "From Religious Zionism to Zionist Religion: The Roots of Gush Emunim," p. 136.

<sup>36</sup> Rabbi Moshe Levinger, quoted in Moshe Kohn, "The NRP and the Gush," *The Jerusalem Post*, 6 August 1976, p. 5.

After 1967 however, party politics lost much of its allure for the students of Mercav Herav, for only weeks before the outbreak of hostilities, at the annual reunion of Mercav graduates held on Israel's national day, R. Zvi Yehuda Kook rose to give a speech on the topic of Israel's Psalm 19. Suddenly, in the midst of his oration, the rabbi began to loudly lament the loss of the biblical patrimony of Israel, torn from the 'living body' of Eretz Yisrael:

"They divided up my land." Yes--this is true. Where is our Hebron? Do we let it be forgotten? And where are our Shechem [Nablus] and our Jericho? Can we ever forsake them? All of Transjordan--it is ours. Every single inch, every square foot...belongs to the Land of Israel. Do we have the right to give up one millimeter?<sup>37</sup>

When weeks later Israel suddenly found itself in control of the very territories named by the rabbi, the speech took on in the mythology of the movement an importance transcending the moment itself, becoming in fact the very embodiment of the spirit of prophesy held by the elder Kook to be inherent in every Jew.<sup>38</sup> The era of redemption had begun.

Prophesy however, tends to be long on strategic vision and woefully short on practical policy. How then, to go about implementing the Kookist vision of redemption? Two paths emerged in the immediate wake of 1967 which would characterize the twin personalities of the Gush to the present day: intense, open discussion resulting in a broad consensus for action, and an impulsive rush to action, confident that "the state will follow in our footsteps, as it always has."<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Gideon Aran, "A Mystic-Messianic Interpretation of Modern Israeli History: The Six Day War as a Key Event in the Development of the Original Religious Culture of Gush Emunim," p. 268.

<sup>38</sup> Moshe Kohn, "The roots go back to the 'fifties," p. 5; Gideon Aran, "A Mystic-Messianic Interpretation of Modern Israeli History," p. 265. Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism: The Bloc of the Faithful in Israel (Gush Emunim)."

<sup>39</sup> The quote is of Rabbi Moshe Levinger, "From Messiah-Son-of-Joseph to Messiah-Son-of David," p. 15.

The more prudent majority of Kookists opened their campaign, typically, with ad hoc meetings of Mercaz Herav students and graduates, out of which a collective vision and identity were forged. This was followed by a period of what could be referred to as mission outreach, with the young Kookists seeking an audience with anyone who would listen, setting up study groups and voluntary associations throughout the country. Next came an assault on the print media, with both self financed newsletters and such established forums as the organs of the B'nai Akiva youth movement, the National Religious Party and the Religious Kibbutz Federation being enlisted in the cause.<sup>40</sup> It was this cautious spadework which would prove invaluable in the formation of a constituency for settlement after the Movement's official formation in 1974. But it would be the second personality of the Gush, personified as always by rabbi Moshe Levinger, which would dominate the media and form the public persona of Gush Emunim.

In the months following the war, R. Moshe Levinger and a group of friends, both religious and secular, found themselves casting about for some concrete plan of action through which to effect the practical 'Judaization' of the Occupied Territories. At one of these meetings, the inspired idea emerged of reestablishing Jewish control of Kfar Etzion, a settlement bloc halfway between Jerusalem and Hebron which had been overrun by the Jordanian Arab Legion on May 13, 1948.<sup>41</sup> Although initially rebuffed by Moshe Dayan, Levinger, undaunted, gathered a group of the offspring of the original 1948 inhabitants of the Etzion Bloc, most notable of whom was Hanan Porat, the charismatic Mercaz graduate who would become, after Levinger, the most widely known personality of the Gush, and

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<sup>40</sup> Gideon Aran, "A Mystic-Messianic Interpretation of Modern Israeli History," pp. 266-267.

<sup>41</sup> Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, p. 11. On the battle of Kfar Etzion, see Nadav Safran, *Israel: The Embattled Ally*, pp. 53-54.

R. Yoel Bin-Nun,<sup>42</sup> and enlisted the support of the National Religious Party (NRP) as well. Prime Minister Levi Eshkol soon acquiesced to this 'homecoming'.<sup>43</sup>

For Levinger however, Kfar Etzion was never more than a stepping stone to the real target; Hebron--the site of the massacre of 1929, and the Cave of the Machpela. Within weeks, Levinger, with LIM cohorts Aharon Amir and Elyakim Haetzni, were placing ads in Israeli newspapers seeking correspondence from all those interested in settling Hebron. Early forays failed to find renters to accommodate the group's need for apartments, so Faiz Kawasme's Park Hotel was chosen as a settlement site, a price agreed upon, and the courteous offer to the 'tourists' to extend their stay as long as they wished, to which one of the party commented in Hebrew that the stay would extend until the coming of the Messiah.<sup>44</sup> Once again, after a deep division in the Israeli government, the settlement of Hebron gained approval,<sup>45</sup> as did the further steps taken by the new settlers. The most important of these is the running battle with Hebron's Arab population over control of the Mosque of al-Khalil/Cave of the Machpela,<sup>46</sup> a true zero-sum conflict whose resolution may well await the End. Less contentious was the March 17, 1970 decision to

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<sup>42</sup> Moshe Kohn, "'Settle the Land and mend the nation'." *The Jerusalem Post* (Israeli edition), August 4, 1976, p. 5.

<sup>43</sup> Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, p.12.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>45</sup> The most notable support for the Levinger group came from David Ben Gurion, who wrote: "Hebron is still awaiting redemption, and there is no redemption without extensive Jewish settlement...Jewish settlement belongs to one and all, including Mapainiks." Ibid., pp. 17-18.

<sup>46</sup> Ehud Sprinzak, "Three Models of Religious Violence: The Case of Jewish Fundamentalism In Israel," In Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, eds., *Remaking the World: The Fundamentalist Impact*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); Ghazi Falah, "Recent Jewish Colonization in Hebron," in David Newman, ed., *The Impact of Gush Emunim*; and Michael Romann, "Jews and Arabs in Hebron: Between Confrontation and Daily Coexistence," *Jerusalem Quarterly* 43 (Summer 1987), pp. 65-68.

build Kiryat Arba outside Hebron,<sup>47</sup> although the Israeli security authorities would never come to grips with settler vigilantism, endemic to Kiryat Arba.<sup>48</sup> Finally, in April, 1979, R. Levinger's wife, on an impulse,<sup>49</sup> led a group of women from Kiryat Arba into the old Jewish hospital in the center of Hebron's Casbah, Beit Haddassah. Once again, after initial confusion and public outrage--Prime Minister Begin even going so far as to call the women "arrogant and neurotic"<sup>50</sup>--the government gave in and from Beit Haddassah, today surrounded by barbed wire and watchtowers manned by IDF guards 24 hours a day, came the settlement of other apartments in the Old City which had, in 1929, belonged to Jews.

And thus ended the vital formative period in the existence of Gush Emunim. Yet success would be insufficient to catalyze the formalization of the organization. Rather, it would be the apparent disaster of 1973, followed by the 'betrayal' of Camp David, to bring about the genesis of Gush Emunim as an organized entity.

### The Third Crisis: Camp David, 1973-1982

The October War of 1973 and its aftermath at Camp David came as a major shock to the the core leadership of the settlement movement. After all, through the NRP the Mercaz

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<sup>47</sup> Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, p.20.

<sup>48</sup> Ehud Sprinzak, "Three Models of Religious Violence: The Case of Jewish Fundamentalism In Israel." Cf. David Weisburd and Vered Yinitzky, "Vigilantism as Rational Social Control: The Case of the Gush Emunim Settlers," in Myron J. Arnoff, ed., *Cross-Currents in Israeli Culture and Politics, Political Anthropology Vol 4* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1984); and David Weisburd, *Jewish Settler Violence: Deviance and Social Reaction*. (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1989). For a view of the provocations of settlers, including the murder of six yeshiva students on May 2, 1980, and of several other killings in Hebron, see Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, esp. ch. 1.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>50</sup> Geoffrey Aronson, *Creating Facts: Israelis, Palestinians & the West Bank* (Washington, D.C.: The Institute for Palestine Studies, 1987), pp. 104-105.

Herav parliamentary axis had helped to fend off the Rogers Plan of 1970.<sup>51</sup> By 1973, there were fifty functioning settlements with infrastructure in place throughout the West Bank, Gaza and the Golan Heights,<sup>52</sup> and if war were to come again, who could doubt either the superiority of Israeli arms, or the hand of God guiding Israel in the redemptive era? There was no reason to suspect that in the war's aftermath, Manachem Begin, the putative champion of the Whole Land of Israel,<sup>53</sup> would singlehandedly reverse the redemption process by returning the Sinai to Egypt and dismantling its settlements. Yet this is precisely what happened, and it is this prolonged crisis which gave birth to Gush Emunim as we know it today.

The first tangible sign that something was amiss arose in the immediate aftermath of the war, when Henry Kissinger's shuttle diplomacy resulted in a series of disengagement agreements with Egypt and Syria. The Syrian accord called for the pullback of Israeli forces by a few kilometers on the Golan Heights. This seemingly innocuous agreement set off strident protests by the Whole Land of Israel constituency,<sup>54</sup> and alerted the core leaders of Gush Emunim to the need for action. Hanan Porat, speaking in 1976, recalls the sequence of events.

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<sup>51</sup> Moshe Kohn, "The NRP and the Gush." The LIM too joined in the attack on the plan. That organization was moved to formulate a position whereby the LIM was called on to save the West, especially the U. S., from themselves, as Israel was seen as the colossus saving the Middle East, and ultimately the world, from Soviet domination. This line in fact followed the view formulated by the LIM in 1968 when, following the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, an editorial in *Zot Haaretz* held that by virtue of Israel's power of will alone, it was Israel that now stood guard over the whole free world. On LIM, see Rael Jean Isaac, *Israel Divided*, pp. 67-68, and 186 n. 49.

<sup>52</sup> Geoffrey Aronson, *Creating Facts*., p. 30.

<sup>53</sup> Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism,"; Ehud Sprinzak, "Three Models of Religious Violence: The Case of Jewish Fundamentalism In Israel,"; and Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*., p. 24.

<sup>54</sup> Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism," Aran notes that it was on this basis too that some of the more extreme elements of the movement debated whether assassinating Kissinger was halachicly sound.



At the height of the war, when the men were away fighting, the wives met with Golda and urged her to let them establish those settlement points 'NOW' [original emphasis]. This would raise morale, which had already sunk quite low. <sup>55</sup>

When Golda declined this generous offer:

...a long festering realization had crystallized in us, that we could not depend on the government or the existing party or settlement frameworks, and that we ourselves had to organize. <sup>56</sup>

This led to a series of meetings in February, 1974 at Kfar Etzion, culminating on 7 February with the decision to found an organization independent of the governmental or party structures. R. Haim Drukman, head of the Or Etzion Yeshiva high school, offered the name Gush Emunim, the Bloc of the Faithful,<sup>57</sup> naming being a detail that was all but forgotten in the excitement of the moment. Indeed, detail and the mechanics of organization would never be a strong suit of Gush Emunim.

Furthermore, until recently we deliberately maintained a loose, voluntaristic framework. We did not want to institutionalize ourselves with membership cards and all that.

We wanted people to feel that their contribution to the cause does not consist in carrying a membership card, but their 'card' is the acts they perform: settlement, cash contributions, participating in demonstrations and marches, volunteering to do work in the office, or at settlement sites, including guard duty. But now we see that we need to deal more systematically with things. <sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Moshe Kohn, "The NRP and the Gush," *The Jerusalem Post* (Israeli edition), August 6, 1976, p. 5.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

The 'organization' of Gush Emunim was set in those Kfar Etzion meetings, but until the mid-1980s, the ad hoc style of the Movement would dominate any and all efforts to impose order on the group through an organized leadership. Rather, Gush Emunim, in common with any number of Middle Eastern religious combatant organizations, would retain a 'state of mind' form of membership, with a top leadership legitimized through religious attainment, a small mediating layer of permanent cadre attached to one or another of the leaders through bonds of personal and teacher/student loyalty, and at the bottom a shifting mass of followers whose loyalty may not be counted upon on any given issue, and for whom cross-membership in other organizations or ethno-political groupings is the norm.<sup>59</sup>

Yet, despite meetings which which were at best, ad hoc in nature, often attended by hundreds with each uninvited member of the audience enjoying full rights to hold forth for as long as he could command the attention of the audience,<sup>60</sup> an organizational framework did eventually emerge. An eleven man Small Secretariat acted as general staff, backed by a twenty-four man Large Secretariat with 4 relatively new non-Orthodox members. Even a diaspora outreach, formed in conscious imitation of the Zionist pioneers of the New Yishuv whose mantle GE seeks to inherit, was created both as a conduit for funds and as a spur to immigration. Yohanan Fried moved in 1976 from GE spokesman and field commander to head of diaspora relations, despite his fluency only in Hebrew. His aim was to establish 'Friends of GE' groups throughout diaspora communities, both for local fundraising and for political influence. The first such groups to become active were in the U. S. Canada

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<sup>59</sup> See for example, on the Shi'i case, Robin Wright, *Sacred Rage* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1986). Cf. Fuad Ajami, *The Vanished Imam* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986); and my own "The Modern Shi'i Millenarian Revolution," (unpublished M.A. thesis, The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, April, 1988). Gideon Aran notes the extreme sensitivity manifested by GE adherents when compared in any way to Arab movements. See Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism."

<sup>60</sup> Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism," best offers the flavor of those early days.

and England, France and Belgium soon followed. Fried stressed to these groups that settlement is both the right and duty of Jews.

Jews abroad are not living in their natural place. The big punishment of being in *Galut* [exile] is that Jews sometimes do not realize that they are in Galut, and they stop dreaming and longing for Eretz Yisrael.

The more we speak naturally of our natural rights, the more the nations of the world will understand and accept us. We should stop our forced 'understanding' of the rights and interests of others, and stress that we are equals in the international arena. True, we must strive to be the best, but first we have to be equal as a natural nation and state. <sup>61</sup>

Armed then, with an organization of sorts, funded through the good offices of the LIM,<sup>62</sup> the Israeli public,<sup>63</sup> the diaspora, and finally, from the World Zionist Organization who in the latter 1970s recognized them as a settlement movement,<sup>64</sup> and blessed with

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<sup>61</sup> Moshe Kohn, "The NRP and the Gush," p. 5.

<sup>62</sup> Rael Jean Isaac, *Israel Divided*, p. 58.

<sup>63</sup> This support was widespread among some wealthy individuals. Fundraising was in theory secret, but as with everything else with the Movement, secrets are available to the journalist or academic for the asking.

"Oh yes, its all very secret and sinister. There are individuals and enterprises who donate tens of thousands of pounds, others who give hundreds. And yes, we get money from abroad, too. We received a letter from a congregation in Florida offering to send us a substantial sum instead of to the UJA [United Jewish Appeal]. If the government and the UJA provide due funds for settlement, well and good. If not, then we have the right to raise the money abroad...The branches conduct fundraising activities. Some people have given standing orders to their banks, where they receive their salaries, automatically to send a fixed monthly sum to the Gush Emunim account,"

"It is remarkable how Gush Emunim sets up a settlement on one-tenth of the budget that it costs the Jewish Agency--IL [Israeli Lira] 1m for an agency unit with basic infrastructure, as against less than IL 100,000 for a Gush Emunim unit. Of course, we also have the element of volunteer workers and donations of equipment. Look at Ofra, that whole thing was brought into existence by values,"

Israeli industrialist Israel Shenkar, quoted in Moshe Kohn, "The Gush: 'A tool of politicians,'" *The Jerusalem Post*, 2 August 1976, p. 5.

<sup>64</sup> Ehud Sprinzak, "The Iceberg Model of Political Extremism," p. 39.

seemingly unlimited popular support, the Gush began in 1975 the series of settlement attempts around Nablus by the subgroup known as the the Elon Moreh Group.

The move to settle the northern sector of the West Bank centering around Nablus was in fact born in Hebron, several months before the October war, when Benny Katzover, who would go on to star in the Knesset politics of the early 1980s, and Manachem Feliks, who would found Kiryat Arba and be elected secretary of the various incarnations of the 'Elon Moreh' group, decided to form a group to reclaim biblical Samaria for Eretz Yisrael.<sup>65</sup> While this plan was temporarily aborted by the war, the Elon Moreh group began a series of no less than 8 illegal settlement attempts on 5 June 1974. Led by the old rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook himself, a highly publicized attempt was made to set down stakes at Hawara, a few miles south of Nablus. The IDF was there with orders to evict the settlers, as was a contingent of some 100 supporters, most notably Ariel Sharon who urged the soldiers to disobey their 'immoral' orders. Guela Cohen provided suitable high-pitched background noise. After a tense standoff, with the settlers vowing to obey to the command of R. Zvi Yehuda to hold their ground to the death, the crisis was by evening diffused by the sudden reversal by the elderly rabbi--commanding one and all to depart peacefully.<sup>66</sup>

At least seven more highly publicized attempts were made by the Elon Moreh group to settle Nablus, culminating in the NRP brokered 'Kaddum compromise' of December 1976,<sup>67</sup> the so-called "Hannukah Miracle in our own time."<sup>68</sup> Centered at the old

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<sup>65</sup> Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, p. 22. Cf. Moshe Kohn, "Redemption or Disaster?" *The Jerusalem Post Magazine*, 30 July 1976, p. 6.

<sup>66</sup> Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*., pp. 26-28. Cf. Micheal Zimmerman, "The Biblical Roots of Elon Moreh," *The American Zionist* 3 (April-May, 1980), for the textual underpinning of the determination to settle Nablus.

<sup>67</sup> Ehud Sprinzak, "The Iceberg Model of Political Extremism," p. 40.

<sup>68</sup> Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism."

Ottoman train station at Sebastia, the Elon Moreh group and thousands of supporters made a final stand against the government, represented on site by Defense Minister Shimon Peres. The government offered a compromise, allowing the settlers to drive in symbolic stakes in the region and to depart in peace. The question confronted the two faces of Gush Emunim with a challenge, with the impulsive, maximalist wing represented by R. Levinger being overruled by the more cautious, consensus oriented majority headed by Hanan Porat.<sup>69</sup> It is a scenario that to the present day would repeat itself continuously in times of crisis.

The pattern of the Israeli government was familiar as well. The government of Yitzak Rabin, which succeeded that of Golda Meir in March 1974,<sup>70</sup> was no more adept at dealing with Gush Emunim than had been the regimes of either Meir or Levi Eshkol. As the inconclusive sparring with the Elon Moreh group carried into the late rounds, Gush Emunim had quietly established an illegal, but lasting, settlement at Ofra near Ramallah in 1975 which would serve as a training ground and staging area for settlement throughout the West Bank north of Jerusalem<sup>71</sup>: the same role played by Hebron in the south..

The 1977 election of Manachem Begin and the Likud coalition was the culmination of a revolution in Israeli politics. The first to expect a tangible benefit from the revolution was Gush Emunim, and indeed illegal settlements such as Ofra in July 1977, were quickly legalized. Begin made no secret of his intentions:

Since May of this year [1977] the name of these areas has been changed from Occupied to Liberated territories. This is liberated Israeli land, and we

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<sup>69</sup> Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*., pp. 32-35.

<sup>70</sup> On the political atmosphere and the change of government, see Nadav Safran, *Israel: The Embattled Ally*, pp. 184-188.

<sup>71</sup> Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism."

call on young volunteers in the country and the diaspora to come and settle here. <sup>72</sup>

The new Prime Minister was apparently even more encouraging in private than he was in public, reportedly summoning Gush leader Hanan Porat to his home in the summer of 1977 for a quiet meeting in which the idealistic Movement could be informed of the political facts of life. GE sources quote Begin as saying, following a lecture on the sort of domestic and international pressure he was under with regard to the Occupied Territories:

Do it [found settlements] clandestinely, and get organized once you're there. Then, after the fact, it will be easy for me to say 'They got the better of me!' After all, nobody would imagine that I, Manachem Begin, would drive Jews off of Jewish land. <sup>73</sup>

The result, despite some resentment that settlement was not to be openly embraced by the government, was a plan to immediately found 12 settlements, which the Begin government would legalize in short order. However, shortly before the operation was to begin, timed for Yom Kippur (October) of 1978, Begin again summoned Hanan Porat.

Only six of the twelve groups may settle during the winter months. Entire families will not be allowed to settle. Only the men may do so. They will have to wear army uniforms and will be housed in army camps... <sup>74</sup>

The ever enthusiastic, but politically naïve, cadres of Gush Emunim should well have taken warning from the twists and turns of Begin settlement policy that something was terribly amiss. They had put almost blind faith in Begin to spearhead the settlement of the Land, in the politicians of the NRP to watch over the process from the cabinet, and in

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<sup>72</sup> Geoffrey Aronson, *Creating Facts*, p. 66.

<sup>73</sup> Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, p. 37.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38.

the Israeli public to continue their unwavering support of the Movement. Yet even in the days before Camp David, seemingly at the height of their popularity and success, the great days of achievement by the Movement were already on the wane. For looming ever larger on the horizon were the consequences of the primary failure of Gush Emunim: the inability to transform the armchair support enjoyed by the movement into a widespread response to forsake the comforts of the Israeli cities for the danger and hardship of pioneer settlement. And it was this failure that opened wide the door for that bane of all popular charismatic movements: bureaucratization. The initiative for settlement was now passing to the government, who alone controlled the resources necessary to make settlement life a practical option for the great majority of Israelis who could not hear the footsteps of Messiah drawing closer, meter by hard won meter, on the West Bank. Thus, a brief look at the evolution of government settlement policies, and at the actual structuring of West Bank settlements as they exist today, is in order.

There have been, since 1967, five major settlement plans before the Israeli government. None have been officially approved. Yet all, to some degree, have contributed to Israeli settlement in its present form.

The Allon Plan, so named for Labor minister and cabinet champion of the Hebron settlement operations Yigal Allon, was presented first in July 1967, and subsequently modified in the following two years. Heavily modeled on the experience of the New Yishuv of the 1930s and 1940s, the plan called for 90 settlements along a defensive line providing a buffer between the Green Line and the Arab population centers of the West Bank, which it carefully avoided including in the chain of settlements.<sup>75</sup> The Allon plan would serve for a decade as the rough outline of the Labor governments' settlement policy, but with the Likud victory of 1977, a new vision was called for. Nevertheless, the 1967-

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<sup>75</sup> Meron Benvenisti and Shlomo Khayat, *The West Bank and Gaza Atlas* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Post, 1988), pp. 63-64; and Geoffrey Aronson, *Israel, Palestinians and the Intifada*, p. 14.

77 Labor governments. left 90 settlements with 57,000 Jews, but with only 7,000 of these outside the greater Jerusalem area.<sup>76</sup>

There were no shortage of new visions; each more fantastic than the the one before. In 1978, Gush Emunim, already in possession of five functioning albeit illegal settlements outside the Allon boundaries,<sup>77</sup> submitted in a fit of boundless optimism, a wide ranging settlement plan which appears to have never been given serious consideration by the Begin government. The plan however, did inspire a heretofore obscure bureaucrat in the World Zionist Organization (WZO), Mattiyahu Drobles, the co-chairman of the WZO Settlement Department, to submit his own, more workable plan. As modified by a 1985 'Master Plan' for settlement, the Drobles plan in effect enlarged the security boundaries of the Allon plan, while at the same time seeking to include the Arab population centers as areas of settlement.

The disposition of the settlements must be carried out not only around the settlements of the minorities [Arabs], but also in between them...Over the course of time, with or without peace, we will have to learn to live with the minorities and among them, while fostering good neighborly relations--and they with us....<sup>78</sup>

The major innovation of the Drobles plan, and the vital missing element in all previous settlement plans, is in its decisive break with the traditions of the New Yishuv settlements. For rather than attempting the difficult and time consuming effort to provide each settlement with the means for agricultural or industrial self sufficiency, Drobles saw no difficulty with allowing West Bank settlements to function in effect as bedroom

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<sup>76</sup> Geoffrey Aronson, *Israel, Palestinians and the Intifada*, p. 70.

<sup>77</sup> Ofra (1975), Kaddum (1975), Elkana (1975), Dothan (1975), and Ma'ale Adumin (1977). Meron Benvenisti and Shlomo Khayat, *The West Bank and Gaza Atlas*, p. 64.

<sup>78</sup> Geoffrey Aronson, *Israel, Palestinians and the Intifada*, p. 97.



communities of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem.<sup>79</sup> With this, the stage for large scale settlement by Jews motivated more by quality of life considerations than by messianism was set.

Two further plans were submitted, but made little impact. The Dayan-Weizman plan, submitted by the current and former Defense ministers in 1978, presented a so-called cantonment plan which in effect would again avoid population centers.<sup>80</sup> Never to be outdone, Ariel Sharon presented, on his 1981 assumption of the Defense portfolio, a plan which amounted to outright Israeli annexation of some 75% of the West Bank as a maximalist form of strategic depth.<sup>81</sup> Both of these plans were non-starters.

The fatal weakness of each of these settlement plans was a dearth of settlers. By 1981, even having opened its settlements to non-ideological settlers and followers of R. Meir Kahane, the Movement had all but exhausted its reservoir of settlers willing to move from the satellite settlements of greater Jerusalem deeper into the West Bank.<sup>82</sup> The infrastructure is in place however, to absorb large numbers of immigrants, making the quote from Alfe Menashe mayor Shlomo Katan which opened this section no empty boast. Arriving settlers in fact, can choose from four distinct settlement types.

The Community Village ( *Kefar Kehillati* ), a small highly cohesive settlement consists of no more than 150 families, with the option of commuting to work inside the Green Line, or of starting local industries in a usually doomed effort to achieve financial independence. Community Villages are governed by an elected union leadership, with union membership obligatory for all resident adults. The Community Settlement (*Yishuv Kehillati* ) maintains the economic features of the Community Village, save that there is no

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<sup>79</sup> Meron Benvenisti and Shlomo Khayat, *The West Bank and Gaza Atlas*, p. 64.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., pp. 64-65.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid. p. 65.

<sup>82</sup> Gershon Shafir, "Institutional and Spontaneous Settlement Drives: Did Gush Emunim Make a Difference?," in David Newman, ed., *The Impact of Gush Emunim*, p. 160.

limit on its size. It makes no effort to achieve the social cohesiveness of the Community Village, and does not require participation in the governing of the settlement. The *Toshava* is even larger than the Community Settlement. Most new settlements carry this designation, although in keeping with the hallowed pattern of West Bank settlement, what precisely separates the *Toshava* from the Community Settlement has never been precisely defined. The crown jewel of West Bank settlement is the urban settlement. Typified by Hebron's Kiryat Arba, an urban settlement is essentially an affluent version of an Israeli moshav (development town), containing at least the potential for economic self-determination, and providing the option for commuting to jobs inside the Green Line, working in the Civil Administration, or involvement in indigenous enterprises.<sup>83</sup> In none of these settlements however, has anything like economic self-sufficiency been achieved. Rather, the settlements remain dependent on outside financing and a majority of settlers are on the government payroll in some fashion.<sup>84</sup> Thus, the definitive pronouncement on the economic dimensions of West Bank settlement is left to Meron Benvenisti:

It is hard to avoid the conclusion that the much vaunted 'pioneer settlers' are, in fact, public servants engaged in a campaign of ideological indoctrination aimed at spreading the 'Greater Israel' message, a campaign wholly financed by the state and the World Zionist Organization.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> David Newman, "Spatial Structures and Ideological Change in the West Bank," in David Newman, ed., *The Impact of Gush Emunim*, pp. 176-178. For a good, in depth view of the kind of complex interactions with Arab populations arising from settlements of this type, see Michael Romann, "Jews and Arabs in Hebron: Between Confrontation and Daily Coexistence." Cf. Idem, *Jewish Kiryat Arba Versus Arab Hebron*, West Bank Data Project series, (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Post Publications, 1976).

<sup>84</sup> A good source on this evolution from revolutionaries to dissident government functionaries is Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism: The Bloc of the Faithful in Israel (Gush Emunim)." Cf. Ehud Sprinzak, "Three Models of Religious Violence: The Case of Jewish Fundamentalism In Israel,"

<sup>85</sup> Meron Benvenisti, *1986 Report: Demographic, Economic, Legal Social and Political Developments in the West Bank* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Post, 1986), pp. 61-62.

Such a luxuriant growth of settlements, and of the state as the employer of last resort for settlers, was far from the minds of the core leaders of Gush Emunim in 1978, when news of Camp David exploded the final bonds of faith between the Movement and Manachem Begin. At a stroke, plans for new settlements were shelved. So too was an evolving plot centering on a notion that the process of redemption could perhaps be made faster by removing from the face of the earth the 'Abomination': the al-Aqsa Mosque on the Temple Mount.<sup>86</sup> All Movement energies were channeled into a desperate effort to prevent the return of the Sinai, for beyond the desert itself, its handful of settlements and its sole functioning oil well, the return of territory in the zero-sum mentality of the Kookist faithful represented a major setback, and who knows, perhaps a complete reversal of the process of Jewish redemption.

Gush Emunim personalities reacted in two ways, distinguishable more as an academic construct than as a reflection of the reality of the time, given the intensive interaction of GE members and the cross membership characteristic of the Movements sub-groups. The pattern was a familiar one. First, on a parliamentary level, the core Gush leaders quickly broke with their traditional home in the NRP, correctly suspecting that this group was ready to compromise rather than risk lucrative government funding of its institutions. Next, the most radical elements of the movement formed small settlement groups and belatedly attempted to set up as many settlements as possible.

The parliamentary political approach also followed time honored patterns, albeit with less success than ever before. The first to arise was that battered but unbowed Messiah Ben Joseph of Israeli politics, the Land of Israel Movement. Forming on November 1, 1978 an ad hoc front group, The Covenant of the Land of Israel Loyalists. The LIM then challenged Begin in the name of the Prime Minister's own hero, revisionist

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<sup>86</sup> Ehud Sprinzak, "Three Models of Religious Violence: The Case of Jewish Fundamentalism In Israel," Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, ch. 13.

Zionist theorist Vladimir Jabotinsky, while the new organization opened a two-front attack: street demonstrations and lobbying efforts among the NRP and Likud parliamentarians.<sup>87</sup> It was the same tactical approach that had been eclipsed 5 years earlier by the more robust activism of Gush Emunim. And it had no more effect now. The LIM admitted defeat on March 29, 1979, the day in which Manachem Begin, Anwar Sadat and Jimmy Carter signed the final Camp David treaty.<sup>88</sup>

Arising from the ashes of the Messiah Ben Joseph's latest debacle was once again Gush Emunim's Messiah Ben David. Or so it seemed for a moment. In October 1979, the Tehiya (Renaissance) party was born as a coalition of GE settlers, Whole Land of Israel dissident Likudniks and extreme Kibbutzniks.<sup>89</sup> Led by Hanan Porat, Yuval Ne'eman, and Guela Cohen, the party was created, apparently at the urging or with the blessing of R. Zvi Yehuda,<sup>90</sup> for the sole purpose of derailing the Camp David Accords in the 1981 elections.<sup>91</sup> This time however, the R. Ben David figure would not triumph, for in the critical 1981 elections Tehiya polled only 44,500 votes and three Knesset seats; too few to challenge Likud's hegemony. This number would in 1984 nearly double, but it was too late to stop the return of the Sinai, and still for a total of only 5 MKs.<sup>92</sup> Indeed, even in the Occupied Territories, the vote was split, leaving Tehiya a loser.

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<sup>87</sup> Ehud Sprinzak, "The Emergence of the Radical Right," p. 175.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Geoffrey Aronson, *Creating Facts*, p. 119.

<sup>90</sup> Julien Bauer, "A New Approach to Religious-Secular Relationships?," in David Newman, ed., *The Impact of Gush Emunim*, p. 103; Ehud Sprinzak, "The Emergence of the Radical Right," p. 175.

<sup>91</sup> Ehud Sprinzak, "The Emergence of the Radical Right," p. 175.

<sup>92</sup> Ian Lustick, *For the Land and the Lord*, (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1988), p. 58. The original 3 MKs were Porat, Ne'eman and Cohen. Porat would later quit the party, disgusted with the compromises and dishonesty inherent in parliamentary politics. See Ehud Dor, "Hanan Porat Returns to Politics," *New Outlook* (September/October, 1988).

Occupied Territories, 1981 <sup>93</sup>				
Likud	Labor	Tehiya	NRP	Other
30.4%	24.9%	23.1%	11.9%	9.7%
Total Israel				
37.2%	36.6%	2.2%	4.9%	19.1%

The more radical sectors of Gush Emunim did not wait patiently for the entirely expected failure of Tehiya to save the day in the halls of the Knesset. Rather, forming in October 1981 the Movement to Stop Withdrawal (MSW), they intensified an ongoing program of settlement attempts in the Sinai which had been sporadic since 1975, and which became more determined only after the March, 1979 peace treaty.<sup>94</sup> In the Sinai, as in the polling stations of Israel, the Movement was in for yet another set of shocks. The veteran Sinai settlers, far from the MSW's religious radicalism, were as it turned out young businessmen, more concerned with a thriving export business than with pushing forward the frontiers of redemption. The first contacts between the groups were characterized by mutual incomprehension, a feeling which quickly escalated to intense enmity.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> G. Goldberg and E. Ben-Zodak, "Gush Emunim in the West Bank," *Middle East Studies* 22 (January, 1986), p. 67.

<sup>94</sup> In fact, sources conflict as to precisely when GE began its penetration of Sinai. The majority view holds that the key date is 1979, with settlement attempts only after Camp David. Gideon Aran however, makes a good case that GE, spurred by the disengagement negotiations, became involved in the Sinai then, losing interest soon after, only to try a crash settlement program in 1979. See Erik Cohen, "Introduction to 'The Price of Peace: The Removal of Israeli Settlements in Sinai'," *Journal of Applied Behavioral Sciences* (Special Issue, 1987), p. 4; and Gideon Aran and Micheal Feige, "The Price of Peace: The Removal of the Israeli Settlements in Sinai," *Ibid.*, p. 76.

<sup>95</sup> Gideon Aran and Micheal Feige, "The Price of Peace: The Removal of the Israeli Settlements in Sinai," p. 85.

...only when the Camp David agreements were signed did we notice that religious faith was not the strong point--to put it mildly--of the people living in the Yamit settlements and in those situated between Eilat and Ophira. The Sinai beaches had become an area where a religious Jew wouldn't set foot. Thus, under these circumstances, in a certain sense, they were no longer ours even before Camp David...<sup>96</sup>

The inner councils of the MSW, as the above quote suggests, were also divided. A majority realized fully the hopelessness of the situation. Led by R. Yisrael Ariel, Benny Katzover and R. Waldman, these leaders counselled passive, and thus symbolic, resistance.<sup>97</sup> A more impulsive group, led again by R. Levinger, vowed to fight to the death, or alternatively, to reenact the Massada scenario, committing revolutionary suicide rather than leave the Sinai.<sup>98</sup> Again, Levinger was overruled,<sup>99</sup> although as the IDF cleared out the remaining pockets of MSW resistance in fierce house to house unarmed struggles, the potential for armed escalation existed up to the moment that Mercaz Herav R. Zvi Tau, in the name of R. Kook, ordered in a telephone call from Jerusalem that all resistance to the IDF cease and Yamit be surrendered.<sup>100</sup> This was done, but not before the Israeli public, having been treated to the entire spectacle via television, turned in revulsion against the Movement who would dare to do battle with the one institution of Israeli society which in those days before the Lebanon invasion had not been touched by public scandal or accusations of incompetence and venality.<sup>101</sup> More, to add to the disgust of Israelis, the established settlers began to accept compensation for their lost Sinai

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<sup>96</sup> Yigal Kirschenshaft, secretary of Hatzar Adar in western Sinai. Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, p. 147.

<sup>97</sup> Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, p. 150.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., p. 151.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., p. 41.

<sup>101</sup> Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism."

property which appeared, to put it mildly, extortionate, demonstrating that their early protestations of principle in refusing governmental evacuation orders as merely a bargaining ploy.<sup>102</sup> Finally, to add insult to injury, many of the MSW settlers, after much agonizing, began themselves to accept government compensation.<sup>103</sup>

Thus, 1982 ended the third crisis of Gush Emunim's existence. This prolonged crisis, which saw the official birth of the Movement, and was followed by unprecedented heights of approval and public acceptance, ended in disaster: the redemption process had been set back, if not aborted, the Movement had been splintered by internal dissent which would soon result in a gradual drifting away of its most important leaders, the sorry affair in the Sinai had robbed the movement of its public approbation while the Likud government had effectively coopted the momentum of settlement itself. Worse, within a week of the Sinai evacuation, the old rabbi, Zvi Yehuda Kook was dead, and the battle for his legacy was waged by his key disciples, each subtly changing or reinterpreting his words to suit their own, narrow purposes.<sup>104</sup> It was in this pitiable condition that Gush Emunim's newest crisis arose as of itself.

#### The Fourth Crisis: Malaise, 1982-1987

1982 was a very bad year for Gush Emunim. No sooner had the forced evacuation of the Sinai been accomplished in March and April, than the Israeli Defense Forces launched a limited incursion into Lebanon which, unknown to most cabinet members, had the wider goal of conquest of that unfortunate state, the elimination of the PLO as a force in

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<sup>102</sup> Erik Cohen, "Introduction to 'The Price of Peace: The Removal of Israeli Settlements in Sinai'," p. 9.

<sup>103</sup> Gideon Aran and Micheal Feige, "The Price of Peace: The Removal of the Israeli Settlements in Sinai," p. 85.

<sup>104</sup> Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, p. 151.

the Middle East, and the installation of a pliant government in Beirut.<sup>105</sup> For its own reasons, centered on Genesis 34 and other biblical passages delineating the boundaries of the biblical patrimony, the Gush enthusiastically supported this adventure.

Gush Emunim views the Lebanon war as a holy war, and...we should therefore thank God and the Israeli Defense Forces for bringing about this righteous war of defense and liberating the lands of Asher and Naftali. Undeniably, what is in question is the land of our forefathers, and we must be alive to the historical fact that the northern part of the Land of Israel cannot be determined arbitrarily by the 1947 partition borders, or even by the borders of the 1948 Armistice, but that we have a historic link with southern Lebanon just as we have with Gilead and the whole of Transjordan...We have a historic continuity in Judea and Samaria. As for the south of Lebanon--or more correctly Northern Galilee--we are now taking the first steps in creating a consciousness and in educating the nation of Israel. <sup>106</sup>

And again from Tehiya, the Lebanon invasion was envisioned as a prelude to greater things on the path to redemption:

...we may have to invade Jordan...we will come to Amman not as strangers. Of course not. After all, as everybody knows, we really 'own' Jordan. <sup>107</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> On this fascinating episode, see from the perspective of the PLO leadership Rashid Khalidi, *Under Siege: PLO Decisionmaking During the 1982 War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986). The military aspects of the conflict are covered well by Richard A. Gabriel, *Operation Peace for Galilee: The Israeli-PLO War in Lebanon* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1984). To my knowledge, a definitive, non-ideological Israeli account has yet to be written. The best so far may be Itamar Rabinovich, *The War for Lebanon 1970-1983* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1984).

<sup>106</sup> Hanan Porat quoted from *Al Hamishmar*, 8 November 1983 (translated and reprinted in December 1983 issue of *Press Briefs of the International Center for Peace in the Middle East*), p. 204.

<sup>107</sup> Edward Witten, "Attitudes of Israeli Socio-Economic Forces Towards the Question of Settlements," in Secretariat General of the League of Arab States, *Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Territories: An International Symposium* (n.c.:Dar al-Afaq al-Jadida, 1985), p. 204. Witten is quoting from the *Jerusalem Post* of January 1, 1984.



Redemption in the form of territorial expansion however, would have to wait. In the summer of 1982, upon the PLO decision to evacuate Beirut en route to Tunis, the siege of Beirut was eased, and with the savage massacres by Christian Phalangists of Palestinian civilians in the refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila on 16-18 September 1982, with the probable presence of Israeli Mossad agents on the ground and with the limited help of IDF mortar crews to illuminate the scene, the fragile Israeli consensus on the war was shattered.<sup>108</sup> Gush Emunim, already alienated from Israeli society by its actions in the Sinai, found themselves once again alone. Their support of the Lebanon invasion stood in stark contrast to the general revulsion at the event which would follow, propelling a powerful anti-war movement, headed by Peace Now, into the limelight. A peace camp was inimical to the settlement of the Occupied Territories, providing West Bank Palestinians with a sympathetic, if ultimately ineffectual, constituency in the Knesset.<sup>109</sup>

The Lebanon war had a profound impact on West Bank Palestinians. In the logic of the Middle East which was so amply demonstrated by the 'October Victory' of Arab arms in 1973, the spectacle of the PLO fighters and command infrastructure being evacuated from Lebanon with UN protection while under the shadow of Israeli guns was less important than the fact that the PLO had fought at all. Not only did they offer resistance, but by all military reports, they gave an impressive accounting of themselves despite profound disadvantages in armaments, training, air support, logistics, C3 functions, and the like.<sup>110</sup> The lesson of all this on the West Bank was that the IDF could be bloodied by the Palestinians themselves, without the help of outside Arab armies.

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<sup>108</sup> Richard A. Gabriel, *Operation Peace for Galilee*, pp. 218-219.

<sup>109</sup> Ehud Sprinzak, "The Iceberg Model of Political Extremism," p. 38.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., chs. 3-4; and Rashid Khalidi, *Under Siege*, ch. 2.

Combined with the rage over Sabra and Shatila, and probably with the ferment within Israel itself, a new mood among Palestinians began to confront the West Bank settlers.<sup>111</sup>

This new mood among Palestinians was immediately felt by West Bank settlers in an upsurge of violence. Violent incidents, classed officially as "violations of Law and Order," such as demonstrations and rock throwing jumped from 400-500 per year between 1977-1980 and 1,500 in 1981/82, to 4,400 in 1982/83, dropping off again in 1983/84 to 3,000.<sup>112</sup> Conversely, deaths of Israeli civilians and soldiers actually declined in 1982, from 11 killed and 131 wounded in 1981 to 3 killed and 29 wounded in 1982.<sup>113</sup> However, statistics do little to convey the pervasive sense of insecurity among settlers, and in particular settlers associated with Gush Emunim, resulting from their sudden isolation from Israeli society. In such an atmosphere, insecurity breeds fear, which in turn nurtures violence. One Gush settler offers a window into the thinking of the time:

Two more holocausts will take place, a world holocaust and a local holocaust. Anti-semitism in the world is not over, also in America it will grow. When this world-wide disaster takes place, maybe even it will be the Last Judgement, it will be accompanied by terrible anti-semitism and the Jews will be pushed, even against their will, in the direction of the Land of Israel. The demographic problem, as far as the Jews are concerned, will be solved. Masses of deportees, refugees, holocaust survivors, will stream into the land of the Patriarches.

Nearby, on the side, before or after the expected worldwide holocaust, a local holocaust will take place, here, in our own country. Is there anyone so naïve as to believe that the Palestinians will accept the autonomy plan? Who is so naïve as to believe that the inhabitants of Judea and Samaria will agree to massive land confiscations combined with a tremendous construction effort of housing projects in the heart of populated areas? That is why, sooner or later, they will bring about another war that will end with a Palestinian holocaust. In the whirlpool of this additional holocaust the Palestinians will either flee, or be made to flee, Judea and

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<sup>111</sup> This conclusion is based on numerous conversations with West Bank Palestinians from all walks of life in 1986-1987.

<sup>112</sup> Meron Benvenisti, *1986 Report*, p. 63.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

Samaria, and the demographic problem, from both sides, will find a solution.<sup>114</sup>

Gush Emunim as an organized entity was unprepared to meet these challenges. The core leadership had begun to drift away, not meeting together in any formal sense since 1981,<sup>115</sup> leaving the organization in the hands of its most extreme elements, most notably the Levinger-Waldman axis in Hebron, and leaving the settlement movement to the bureaucrats of the Amana settlement organization.<sup>116</sup> This sudden vacuum left the field clear for two interrelated phenomena: settler vigilantism and the activities of the Jewish Underground.

Settler vigilantism did not begin in 1982. It has been a constant feature of Jewish-Arab relations on the West Bank since the early 1970s. Vigilante violence was however, before the 1980s, not the preferred Gush Emunim method of dealing with anti-settler violence by Arabs. Rather, the answer was "settlements and more settlements," with resort to physical violence being seen very much as a measured, tit for tat one-time operation.<sup>117</sup>

What the 1980s did bring however, was a change in the character of vigilantism, with participation among settlers becoming increasingly widespread, and with the concept

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<sup>114</sup> Geoffrey Aronson, *Creating Facts*, pp. 289-90, quoting *Al-Hamishar*, 3/11/82.

<sup>115</sup> David Weisburd and Elin Waring, "Settlement Motivations in the Gush Emunim Movement: Comparing Bonds of Altruism and Self Interest," in David Newman, ed., *The Impact of Gush Emunim*, p. 183.

<sup>116</sup> The genesis in 1976 of Amana as the clearing house for West Bank settlement expertise, the activities of such core Gush personalities as Porat, Yoel Bin-Nun, and Haim Drukman, as well as the gradual takeover of the leadership of individual settlements by non-Kookist members of Gush Emunim is covered in depth in Section II.

<sup>117</sup> David Weisburd, *Jewish Settler Violence: Deviance and Social Reaction*, (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1989), pp. 26-30; Ehud Sprinzak, "Three Models of Religious Violence: The Case of Jewish Fundamentalism In Israel," ; and Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, offers an emotive recounting of the process by which this measured response degenerated into random vigilantism.

of 'collective punishment' replacing the original, narrowly focused operations.<sup>118</sup> The reasons for this change may be centered in the increasing isolation of the settlement movement from Israeli society in the wake of Yamit and Lebanon, and in the withdrawal of the more consensus oriented leaders of the Gush in these years. It may also be that settler vigilantism is a form of behavior which, in the context of the West Bank, exacts few costs in terms of official sanctions or Arab counter-violence, and in the view of the participants, was supported by local IDF commanders whose hands were tied by the Israeli government from making the sort of response to Arab violence that they would have preferred to make.<sup>119</sup>

They [the military government officials] came to check who did it...[They] said that that was a good idea [i.e. the vigilante act]...They just suggested that next time we do private homes and not public buildings because the government has to pay for damage to public property...We have a lot of support from the military government, quite a lot of support.<sup>120</sup>

There is as well the perception that vigilante action is well fitted to the Arab psyche.

There have to be good relations with the Arabs, as far as possible. But, one has to show firmness if they make trouble. Because the mentality of the Arabs is such that they are used to the situation that people with power have to show their power. If someone throws a stone at you, you don't walk over and say *Shalom* etc. Rather, first of all, you throw two stones at him, and afterwards *Sulchah* [meeting of reconciliation].<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> David Weisburd, *Jewish Settler Violence*., pp. 68-69.

<sup>119</sup> David Weisburd and Vered Yinitzky, "Vigilantism as Rational Social Control: The Case of the Gush Emunim Settlers," in Myron J. Arnoff, ed., *Cross-Currents in Israeli Culture and Politics, Political Anthropology Vol 4* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1984), pp. 80-81.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 82.

<sup>121</sup> David Weisburd, *Jewish Settler Violence*, p. 76.

Vigilante violence is effected also by an increasing number of followers of R. Meir Kahane's Kach party becoming active in the West Bank settlements, particularly at Kiryat Arba. For them, anti-Arab violence is salutary for its own sake, and is further of value in proportion to its very randomness in that the creation of a climate conducive to the voluntary or forcible removal of the Arab population out of Eretz Yisrael is the primary aim of the movement.<sup>122</sup> Nothing could be more alien to the Kookist members of Gush Emunim, for whom Arabs, at least until the intifada, would always retain the choices of accepting Zionism [i.e. Kookism] and become willing partners in Jewish redemption, receiving full citizenship in the process; to obey the laws without avowing allegiance and receiving resident alien status [*ger toshav*]; or to accept compensation and to immigrate.<sup>123</sup>

The 1985 exchange of prisoners in which the small Palestinian combatant group of Ahmad Jebril obtained the release of some 1500 Palestinian prisoners for 3 Israeli PoWs had a major impact as many of these prisoners under the agreement were allowed to return to their homes on the West Bank and Gaza Strip.<sup>124</sup> Indeed, the impact of this event was magnified by the 1983 release of 5,000 Arab prisoners in exchange for six IDF soldiers, in reprisal for which the Jewish Underground changed its *modus operandi* from reprisal attacks to active deterrence, targeting Arab passenger busses without any particular provocation.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> Aviezer Ravitzky, *The Roots of Kahanism: Consciousness and Political Reality*, (Jerusalem: Shazar Library et. al., 1986); Ehud Sprinzak, "Three Models of Religious Violence,"; and Geoffrey Aronson, *Creating Facts*, p. 106, 122-123. In addition, four Kahanists were imprisoned with the Jewish Underground. See Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, p. 260.

<sup>123</sup> Ehud Dor, "Hanan Porat Returns to Politics," p. 19; "Waiting for the Call," *The Jerusalem Post Magazine*, March 13, 1987, p. 8; Ehud Sprinzak, "Gush Emunim: The Tip of the Iceberg," *Jerusalem Quarterly* 21, (Fall, 1981), p. 38; et. al.

<sup>124</sup> Meron Benvenisti, *1986 Report*, p. 64.

<sup>125</sup> Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, pp. 181-182.

Finally, within the Gush itself, there was by 1984 or 1985, a sea change in the core of the movement. With the balancing presence of the likes of Porat and Bin-Nun removed, R. Levinger was left with no strong institutional check on his behavior. Thus a handpicked Levinger protégé, Daniella Weiss, was elected Secretary-General, and the movement turned to vigilante violence on an unheard of scale, culminating in 1987 when a settler rampage in the Dehaisha refugee camp, on the heels of earlier violence in Kalkilya, forced Bin-Nun and Porat to step in and attempt to put the Movement back on its original course.<sup>126</sup>

But at the deepest possible level, there seems to be a dynamic at work which underlies the resort to vigilantism, and which is commonly noted among Palestinians on the West Bank, but is never mentioned in the press or the scholarly literature on the subject. That is, perhaps as a result of the concentration on the Holocaust in Israeli education and media, or perhaps due to the less immediate historical experience of the Jewish people, there appears to be a widespread feeling in Israel that Jewish lives are simply of far greater value than Arab lives. This would seem to be at the root of asymmetries of Israeli justice in dealing with Arabs and Jews. Note in this respect the five month sentence handed down to R. Levinger for a crime which, had it been committed by an Arab, would have resulted in a life sentence and in the destruction of the culprit's house. Too, it seems to be the belated recognition of this which explains the virtual silence greeting the controversy regarding the recent rabbinic edict holding that indeed, Jewish blood is of more value than gentile blood,

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<sup>126</sup> See "Split in the bloc," and "Rebels in Gush Emunim win share of leadership," *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, May 23, 1987, p. 7 and 4 respectively. It is interesting to note that since the mid-1980s, the behavior--and even the physical appearance--of rabbi Levinger has changed considerably. The violence of his character has increased to the point of going on an apparently unprovoked shooting spree in Hebron in 1991, leaving one Arab dead, and resulting in a 5 month jail sentence (of which he served 3 1/2). Equally as striking however, is the change in the man's physical appearance over the same period. Looking at pictures from the 1960s and 1970s, and comparing these with having seen him on several occasions in Hebron in 1986 and 1987, and finally comparing these with recent photographs, Levinger has lost a great deal of weight, becoming almost sepulchral, with a wild and unkempt look of beard and clothing, and an increasingly otherworldly aura. He looks today like nothing so much as an idealized vision of an Old Testament prophet. Or a terminal cancer patient.

therefore Jewish murders of gentiles should go free, but gentiles who kill Jews should be punished.<sup>127</sup> Commenting on the uproar over these remarks, Shlomo Goren stated:

Anyone who claims that we should differentiate between the punishment of a non-Jewish murderer and a Jewish one is correct, although we need not state everything publicly before the world.<sup>128</sup>

It is this view which explains the recent national hysteria over the death of an Israeli teenage girl in the West Bank village of Beita, when a number of houses were destroyed by the IDF and the Prime Minister appeared on the scene to make tearful and indignant speeches, before finding that the girl had been killed by her own bodyguard while on one of the Gush's odd 'nature hikes', aiming to demonstrate to the Arab inhabitants that Jews enjoy ownership of all of the West Bank.<sup>129</sup>

The second symptom of the malaise of the Movement in the mid-1980s was the emergence of the Jewish Underground. The Jewish Underground riveted the attention of the Israeli public like no other event in recent memory, spilling in the process rivers of ink in an attempt to explain the phenomenon to an enthralled public. Core Kookist adherents were reduced to public soul searching, while the organization publicly disowned the Underground, refusing to pay legal expenses or even to offer moral support. Yet ironically, the Underground may well have saved the Movement from oblivion, for it was the arrest of the Underground which culminated years of public disdain of the Gush. This public disenchantment with the Gush, it will be recalled, began with Yamit, intensified

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<sup>127</sup> Rabbi Yitzhak Ginzburg, head of the Joseph's Tomb Yeshiva in Nablus at the trial of seven of his students for the murder of an Arab girl during a violent rampage through the West Bank village of Kifl Harit held that Arab blood before the law was by nature unequal to Jewish blood, and therefore Arabs who kill Jews should be punished, but Jews who kill Arabs should go free. *Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 17 June 1989, Editorial Page.

<sup>128</sup> Quoted in Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism."

<sup>129</sup> For an overview of this incident, see Erik Cohen, "A Pilgrimage to Beita," *The Jerusalem Quarterly* 49, (Winter, 1989).

with the Lebanon war and the widespread perception of the Movement as synonymous with vigilante violence, and in the end, it forced the more cautious forces of Gush Emunim back in to the life of the Movement.

The actual birth of the Underground can be traced to sometime in 1978, when two men, Yehuda Etzion and Yeshua Ben Shoshan, first began to consider the implications of blowing up the Dome of the Rock.<sup>130</sup> The Temple Mount Operation, planned for over 6 years by a shifting constellation of conspirators, would never be operationalized. Its failure may be traced on the one hand to the constant distractions of vigilante violence. Nearly all members of the Temple Mount operation were involved in vigilante responses to Arab violence, and these operations, to be effective, needed to closely follow the original incident. More central however, was the hypernomian character of the conspirators themselves. They had from the beginning in the late 1970s sought the sanction of a rabbi of sufficient standing to undertake the operation. From R. Zvi Yehuda Kook to R. Levinger, this sanction was not forthcoming, and so the action was stillborn.<sup>131</sup>

With rabbinic sanction for the Temple Mount operation not forthcoming, an incident would occur on the evening of 2 May 1980 which would transform the Underground from a small sect of messianic dreamers to a genuine combatant movement: the murder in

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<sup>130</sup> Ehud Sprinzak, "Fundamentalism, Terrorism and Democracy: The Emergence of Gush Emunim," p. 10.

<sup>131</sup> The intricate theological issues surrounding this problem are discussed in Section II. For a good academic overview, see Ehud Sprinzak, "From Messianic Pioneering to Vigilante Terrorism: The Case of the Gush Emunim Underground," *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 4, (December, 1987), pp. 207-213. For an insider's view, see Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*. For a sympathetic analysis, see Paul Eidelberg, "Of Moles and Men: The Case of the Jewish Underground," *Morasha* 2 (Winter, 1985). The best available academic model for messianic violence with strong millenarian overtones of the type of the Underground, see David Rappaport, "Messianic Sanctions for Terror," *Comparative Politics* 20 (January, 1988). Finally, for a view grounded in Halacha [Jewish Law], see Emanuel Rackman, "The Underground: An Halachic View," *Morasha* 2 (Winter, 1985).



Hebron of six yeshiva students and the wounding of several others.<sup>132</sup> The settlers lost no time in putting the blame on the recently elected Arab mayors of the National Guidance Committee, a group of young, nationalist mayors who managed to sweep from power the town elders and *mughtars* [village heads] whose cooperation with the Israelis had lightened the burden of Occupation considerably.<sup>133</sup> Their rage however was unfocused, and was assuaged considerably with the promise to immediately deport mayors Kawasme and Milhelm, as well as the Qadi [Islamic judge] of Hebron, Sheikh Biwad al-Tamimi.<sup>134</sup> This however, did not satisfy Manachem Livni, and in a pattern which would come to characterize the Underground, he gathered a small group on an ad hoc basis and formed a plan, conceived with both an operational and a halachic dimension, to plant explosives under the cars of the members of the National Guidance Committee.<sup>135</sup> Bassam Shaka'a lost his legs, and Kharim Khalef was severely injured in the attack, while an Israeli Druse sapper was blinded in dismantling another device.<sup>136</sup> While only a partial operational success, the attack was important in that it would be the only action of the Underground which would receive complete approbation in Gush circles, and it would not even in hindsight after the arrests of the Underground be disowned.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, ch.1 describes this event in detail; Cf. Ehud Sprinzak, "Fundamentalism, Terrorism and Democracy: The Emergence of Gush Emunim," p. 10; and Geoffrey Aronson, *Creating Facts*, p. 201.

<sup>133</sup> These mayors, not officially PLO members, included Kharim Khalef of Ramallah, Bassam Shaka'a of Nablus, Fahd Kawasme of Hebron (whose brother first rented the Park Hotel to R. Levinger's group in 1968), Muhammad Milhelm of Halhoul (a small, hilly village contiguous to Hebron and famous as a local center of resistance, Milhelm would die at the hands of reputed Syrian agents in exile in Amman some years later), Hilme Hanun of Tulkarm, and Ibrahim Talwil of el-Bireh.

<sup>134</sup> Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, pp. 76-78; Geoffrey Aronson, *Creating Facts*, p. 201.

<sup>135</sup> Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, pp. 84-109.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. 10.

<sup>137</sup> See for example. "Waiting for the Call," *The Jerusalem Post Magazine*, 13 March 1987, p. 9, in which Hanan Porat specifically condemns the attacks on the Islamic

Following the mayors attack, the Underground entered a period of dormancy, with the attention of Yehuda Etzion, Yeshuah Ben Shoshan and Manachem Livni, again with a shifting group of acolytes, turning again to the problem of the Dome of the Rock. But on 7 July 1983, Aharon Gross, an 18 year old yeshiva student in Hebron, was shot at close range and killed. The attack came at a time of a significant upsurge in violence on the West Bank.<sup>138</sup> After some initial discussion, a new ad hoc group formed under Livni's leadership, and a plan to attack the Hebron Islamic University was formed.<sup>139</sup> This plan, carried out in July, 1983, was a significant escalation in the activities of the Underground. For now 'collective punishment' would replace the focused attacks on specified individuals. Three students were killed, and 33 more injured.<sup>140</sup> But more had changed than the public knew in this operation, for not publicized was the fact that the U.S. Consul from East Jerusalem, USIA representative William Cavness, happened to be visiting the school that day, and hid under a desk as he watched the murders take place.<sup>141</sup> Needless to say, the American government had some response to this 'coincidence', and suddenly the Shin Bet security service was, on the direct order of Prime Minister Begin, taking a far closer look than before at the Underground.<sup>142</sup> It was the beginning of the end for the Jewish Underground.

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University in Hebron and the bus plot, but pointedly makes no mention of the mayors affair.

<sup>138</sup> "Fundamentalism, Terrorism and Democracy," p. 10.

<sup>139</sup> Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, p. 173.

<sup>140</sup> "Fundamentalism, Terrorism and Democracy: The Emergence of Gush Emunim," p. 10.

<sup>141</sup> Personal conversations with Mr. Cavness' replacement in Jerusalem, David Good. This was confirmed at a Fulbright conference in Washington by Mr. Cavness in 1987.

<sup>142</sup> Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, pp. 179-180.

Thus, when the plan to plant bombs on Arab busses in reprisal for the release of 5,000 Arab prisoners in 1983, the Shin Bet had already identified the culprits, and actually allowed them to plant the bombs before making the initial arrests.<sup>143</sup> Arrests continued throughout the settlements for several weeks, and the Jewish Underground was finished as an operational entity.

The Underground's successes were few, and the twin phenomena of the Underground and widespread vigilante violence were symptomatic of the intense malaise at the heart of the crisis in Gush Emunim in the 1980s. At the heart of this malaise was the deepening chasm separating the Israelis within the Green Line from those in the Occupied Territories.<sup>144</sup> Arguably, had it not been for the intifada, the Palestinian attempt to 'shake off' the Israeli Occupation, Gush Emunim may not have survived. But the Underground and the vigilante violence brought the forces of balance back to the inner councils of the Gush, while the intifada allowed Gush Emunim to realize what had been the true goal of both vigilantism and the Underground's activities: the commitment of the IDF--and thus Israeli society--to the Movement's activities in the Territories. Shauli Nir, a member of the Underground and occasional freelance operative, put this best in an anguished manifesto written shortly before his arrest.

We are commanded to love and respect every creature. But an intolerable situation has arisen in Israel. Jews find it impossible to live peacefully and with dignity, and live instead in the shadow of a constant lack of security. The state of Israel, unfortunately, has abandoned its claim to full sovereignty and the enforcement of public order. Therefore it has created a void which is effectively exploited by the Arab public. This public envisions and works toward wiping the State of Israel off the map. It hates the state and its Jewish citizens and rejoices at reports of attacks on them. It is a well-known rule that he who justifies violence also fans its flames. Under such conditions the government has no moral right to demand that its Jewish citizens sacrifice their security for a law that goes unenforced. After all, the ultimate purpose of law itself is the preservation and sanctity of life.

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<sup>143</sup> Ibid., pp. 181-182.

<sup>144</sup> David Weisburd, *Jewish Settler Violence*, pp. 133-136.

As Jews and as human beings, we cannot ignore the moral imperative of self-defense. We must not sacrifice our lives and our right to live anywhere in our own country because of a policy of inertia and appeasement of a hostile minority. Any ethical system endangering our lives and our children's lives is false. Our actions are meant to show the Arab population that continued terrorist activity or identification with it will bring unpleasant results. *But above all, they are intended to alert the Israeli authorities to the need to enforce law and order, and to stop standing idly by while Jewish blood is spilled.* [italics mine] Indeed, any attack on a person or community is ostensibly immoral, but it should always be remembered that the right to stay alive is also anchored in morality, as is a people's right to be the only sovereign entity within the borders of its homeland."<sup>145</sup>

### The Fifth Crisis: The Intifada, 1987 to date

The intifada brings us full circle to the point where this chapter began: the textual imperative typified by Genesis 34 and by the tale of the the Messiahs Ben Joseph and Ben David. Born of despair, the ever more suffocating embrace of the Occupation, of economic decline with the devaluation of the Jordanian currency, of the 1986 Amman Arab summit in which courtesy of Jordan state television West Bank Palestinians could observe the heads of brother Arab states dispense with even the traditional empty platitudes in support of the Palestinian cause in the larger interest of the Iran-Iraq war, and finally triggered by an auto accident in Gaza, the intifada presented Gush Emunim with its last, and most severe, crisis.

The intifada came as a severe shock to the the adherents of Gush Emunim no less than it was to the Israelis inside the Green Line. The first haphazard responses involving Gush settlers, along with Kahanists and even some non-ideological settlers were to open a campaign of vigilantism, utilizing the 'collective punishment' principle which in the past had proved effective in deterring localized violence.<sup>146</sup> This time however, the effect was similar to dousing a fire with gasoline, and the intifada spread inexorably to the villages

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<sup>145</sup> Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, pp. 183-184.

<sup>146</sup> See for example, of the thousands of press articles in this period. For example, "Settlers take action," *The Jerusalem Post*, 6 March 6, 1987, p. 3; and "Jewish Settler Kills an Arab Amid Continuing Disorders," *New York Times*, 9 February 1988, p. 6.

throughout the West Bank and Gaza. In the face of spiraling violence, the IDF was for months paralyzed by the political gridlock in Jerusalem, creating among West Bank settlers a marked intensification of the growing sense of isolation which had been the lot of the Movement in the post-Lebanon politics of Israel.<sup>147</sup> It was this sense of isolation which was most unnerving to the Gush leadership.

The main problem for our people is that they feel that the whole nation is not behind them heart and soul, that we have settlement without national consensus. Settlement has always been applauded, and now the consensus has suddenly broken--this breaks our hearts. This is the most serious problem.<sup>148</sup>

This fear was erased however, in mid-1988 when the iron fist policy of "force, might and beatings" was initiated by the Israeli inner cabinet under the supervision of Defense Minister Yitzak Rabin.<sup>149</sup> The engagement of the IDF in the intifada realized the long-standing Gush Emunim goal of forcing the Israeli government to carry the brunt of violent suppression of Palestinian independence activities. Where the Jewish Underground's activities had proved counter-productive to this effort, the shock of the intifada forced the Israeli government to examine fully the issues and implications of the Occupation, and the answer that came down in the form of the Rabin policy was clearly that the West Bank had become indivisible from Eretz Yisrael;<sup>150</sup> a position long advocated by

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<sup>147</sup> David Weisburd, *Jewish Settler Violence*, pp. 133-136.

<sup>148</sup> Ehud Dor, "Hanan Porat Returns to Politics," p. 20.

<sup>149</sup> For the reasoning behind this policy, and for one of the most cogent and brutally honest expositions of the zero-sum nature of the conflict on the West Bank, see the interview with Yitzak Rabin in "War by other means," *The Jerusalem Post International edition*, 17 September 1988, p. 3.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

Gush Emunim. On the eve of the intifada, Hanan Porat presaged this evolution in an interview with the Jerusalem Post:

Nothing's impossible--that's what life, the history of the Jewish people and the behavior of the *goyim* [Gentiles] have taught me.

Nevertheless, you can say that a new reality has been created. There are too many settlements, factories, new schools and highways in Judea, Samaria and Gaza. It's become very hard, Thank God, to imagine giving them up, withdrawing from them, uprooting them. We're not talking here of Sinai and Yarnit. All kinds of Jews have come to live here. I'm very glad about that.<sup>151</sup>

With the IDF carrying the brunt of the battle with the Palestinians, Gush Emunim was given a pause to undergo its own period of reflection, and what emerged, not surprisingly, were two contradictory directions--neither of which bodes well for the future of the movement. The first, the rash and violent side of the movement headed by R. Levinger, responded to the intifada, and to the divisions within the religious Zionist movement which it aggravated, with a more open embrace of messianism, with powerful shadings of apocalypticism, than the Movement had ever publicly dared before.

Earlier I said that the settlement movement was the material base--Messiah-son-of-Joseph; it is now up to us to take another step forward, and begin to preach the message of Messiah-son-of-David....The essence of Zionism is the vision of the Jewish People during the First and Second Temples. This vision, this spiritual message, must be the essence of the Third Temple. This and more: the spiritual message of the Third Temple will be so exalted that it will not be destroyed...

The same is true for Gush Emunim. If, at the beginning of our enterprise, 15 years ago, we had sharply set out these things [the Messiahs paradigm], the results might have been different. The left has called us messianists. They correctly grasped that settlement is an intermediate stage on the way to the great, exalted message.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> "Waiting for the call," *The Jerusalem Post Magazine*, 13 March 1987, p. 8.

<sup>152</sup> Rabbi Moshe Levinger, "From Messiah-Son-of-Joseph to Messiah-Son-of David," p. 16.

This open embrace of messianism takes the step scrupulously avoided by the Movement from its inception: that of openly staking a position which placed the Movement in isolation from not only secular Israelis, but from all but the the most extreme of the Orthodox Zionist opinion. Yet the second path travelled by the majority of Gush adherents during the intifada, while more circuitous, is no less inimical to the original intent of the Movement.

When it became clear that the force applied by the IDF could contain, but not crush, the intifada, the more idealistic majority of Gush adherents despaired of the long cherished dream of the Arabs joining of their own volition the Jewish redemptive enterprise. It is only natural that disappointment leads to despair and in the end gives way to rage. And in Israel, all avenues of unfocused anger led, before his assassination, to the door of R. Meir Kahane. Hanan Porat again, provides the model:

A month before the outbreak of the intifada Porat said: 'Coming from the perspective that today we are building the correct model of relations between ourselves and the Arab population, we hope that a situation of respect and friendship will come to prevail between us. This depends first and foremost on us'. Now [Fall, 1988] he says: 'If I were to come to believe that, in the end, there was no chance that the Arabs would come to terms with our presence in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, I would reach the conclusion of R. Kahane'. <sup>153</sup>

As the intifada dragged on however, more moderate views were for a time heard from the Porat/Bin-Nun majority of the Gush. Rabbi Moni Ben Ari of Kfar Adumin, an influential member of the Gush Emunim core leadership, declared himself in favor of Arab autonomy and suggested that he was ready to lead his people out of the Ramallah area as part of an overall settlement.<sup>154</sup> While these views were quickly and publicly recanted,

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<sup>153</sup> Ehud Dor, "Hanan Porat Returns to Politics," p. 18.

<sup>154</sup> Haggai Segal, "The Intifada and the Many Voices of the Gush Emunim Movement," *Jewish Action* 3 (Summer 1989), p. 31.

other voices from the Gush suggested a less ostentatious, but more profound change was taking place:

Before, I wasn't interested in what the Arabs were thinking, what they were saying. I simply didn't pay attention. My attitude towards the Palestinian problem was too simplistic. Today, I'm more aware of its complexities. Current events are propelling the PLO toward a more moderate direction and we can't afford to ignore that. 155

Rabbis Yoel Bin-Nun and Hanan Porat sought to further within Gush circles the moderation reflected in the above quotation.<sup>156</sup> Some Gush figures went further, initiating in one case a meeting with Palestinian nationalist figure Faisal Husseini in Jerusalem.<sup>157</sup> Other localized contacts were initiated with Palestinians to reach some sort of *modus vivendi*, allowing both sides to live in relative peace. It is an effort which has achieved some limited measure of success.<sup>158</sup>

In the end however, outside events have overtaken both camps of Gush Emunim. For it was inevitable that once the primary political objective of Gush Emunim had been achieved--involving the state and the citizenry in the vision of Eretz Yisrael--there could be only two possible outcomes. In line with Kookist ideology and the view of this as the redemptive era, the secular majority could miraculously find within themselves the Sacred Spark, and emerge as a corporate Messiah Ben David from the husk of the secular Zionist Ben Joseph. Clearly, this has not occurred. Rather, the force of Israeli opinion on the

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<sup>155</sup> Ibid., pp. 30-31. The quote is from Ephraim Zorof, a historian from Gush Etzion.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., p. 32.

<sup>157</sup> "Settlement rabbi meets PLO man, sparks row," *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 7 October 1989, p. 5.

<sup>158</sup> "Where sanity prevailed," *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 23 December 1989.



indivisibility of the West Bank from Israel comes *in spite* of Gush Emunim, not because of it. According to Haggai Segal, the chronicler of the Jewish Underground:

Evidently, the first to break out of their shell of self restraint will be those who live five minutes away from Kfar Saba (within the Green Line). Not the wolves of Elon Moreh nor the lions of the southern terrain of Mt. Hebron. It will be the the bare-headed, unbearded settlers who'll raise the banner of Jewish rebellion. Within the urban settlements of Ariel, Ginot Shomron and Alphe Menashe there has risen up a new brand of settler. They are not the ones that Israel has become familiar with in the past decade. They didn't come to Samaria out of ideological reasons. They came looking for living space that was to be acquired cheaply. <sup>159</sup>

Thus, the twin scenarios of the Messiahs Ben Joseph and Ben David, and the territorial imperative of Genesis 34 have come to be played out in West Bank, but not in the way envisioned by either of the two faces of Gush Emunim. For the former, it now seems clear that far from secular Zionism playing the role of Ben Joseph to Gush Emunim's Ben David, other far stronger forces may well be the inheritors of the Movement which Gush Emunim so idealistically initiated. Before his death, there were some indications that this heir may well have been none other than Meir Kahane. Consider for example, a survey taken before the intifada:

The Jerusalem van Leer Foundation has conducted since the summer of 1984 three surveys of the political attitudes of Israel's high school generation (the 15-18 year olds). The September 1984 study found out that 60% of the respondents thought Arabs did not deserve full equality and 42% were in favor of restricting the political rights of non-Jews. The following survey, conducted in May 1985, showed that 40% agreed with Kahane's opinions and 11% said they were ready to vote for him. A further breakdown of the results indicated exceptionally strong support for Kahane's ideas among the religious youth (59%) and among young people of Oriental origins (50%). The April 1986 survey, which was conducted after an intense anti-Kahane campaign throughout most of the political system, showed a small decline in the support for the rabbi's positions. Only one-third of the respondents thought Kahane's opinions were right and 75% said they would vote for him. Fifty percent, however, were still

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<sup>159</sup> Haggai Segal, "The Intifada and the Many Voices of the Gush Emunim Movement," pp. 31-32.

favorable to the idea of restricting the rights of the Arabs and 56% opposed equal rights to non-Jews. <sup>160</sup>

A survey completed in 1990 however, describes a significant change among the same target audience. Nearly 70% of 11th and 12th graders now favor "encouraging Arab residents to leave the Territories." 60% favor holding the Territories even if human rights are violated while 40% feel that surrendering territory would be harmful to Zionism, an ideology to which some 90% subscribed. Further, an "overwhelming majority" (a precise figure is unstated) would choose to sacrifice democracy, if that system conflicted with Zionist principles.<sup>161</sup>

One hardly needs to be a Kach follower to see the impact of the Territorial imperative of Genesis 34 on the Israeli view of the West Bank today. Here too, it was Gush Emunim who imprinted the biblical mandate, through its renaming of the towns and villages of the West Bank to their biblical forms, on the Israeli consciousness. Yet it would not appear to be Gush Emunim who stands to inherit the Land for which it sacrificed so much. Rather, a rapidly expanding Jewish population requires, to borrow an unfortunate but accurate term, *liebenstraum*. And with the current wave of immigration of Russian Jews, and a lesser known stream of Ethiopian and other Jews, expected to top 1 million by the year 2000,<sup>162</sup> the land of the West Bank will be needed to accommodate them all. The

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<sup>160</sup> For a further description of the growth of Israeli ultra-nationalism see Charles S. Liebman. "Jewish Ultra-Nationalism in Israel: Converging Strands" in William Frankel (ed.), *Survey of Jewish Affairs* (London, Associated Universities Press, 1985). Quoted in Ehud Sprinzak, "Three Models of Religious Violence: The Case of Jewish Fundamentalism In Israel," Cf. Michael Rosenak. "Jewish Fundamentalism in Israeli Education," For the best available exposition of this evolution, see Aviezer Ravitzky. *The Roots of Kahanism: Consciousness and Political Reality*, (Jerusalem: Shazar Library et. al., 1986).

<sup>161</sup> "Study: Teens favor Arab emigration," *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 29 September 1990, p. 7. Cf. "Polls show hardening of attitudes towards Arabs and PLO state," *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, , 25 August 1990, p. 10.

<sup>162</sup> "Shamir: A million newcomers by the year 2000," *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 8 September 1990, p. 8.

water and the resources of the West Bank will be required as well by Israel as the year 2000 nears.<sup>163</sup>

What is not required in this vision, clearly, are the Palestinian inhabitants of the West Bank. Palestinian allegiance to the cause of Saddam Hussein in the Gulf conflict, a choice much akin to a drowning man grasping at a floating reed as he is pulled inexorably under,<sup>164</sup> has frayed the final, flickering links with the Israeli body politic maintained by the West Bank residents.<sup>165</sup> As Israel turns inward upon itself, concentrating on the settlement of immigrants and on its defense in the face of an Arab world perceived as irretrievably hostile, it would appear that, given an appropriate international climate, the final barriers to the long-standing 'transfer' proposal,<sup>166</sup> and its companion, the 'Jordan is the Palestinian state' scenario,<sup>167</sup> may be falling, despite the Labor victory in the 1992

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<sup>163</sup> "Eitan: 'We must control territories water resources'," *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 1 September 1990, p. 6.

<sup>164</sup> It is notable that in my own two years in the West Bank, during the climactic stages of the Gulf War, virtually the only issue on which Palestinians could agree was on the overweening evil of Saddam and a fervent hope that Iran would emerge victorious. However, the Palestinians have a history of seizing on the hopes for outside aid in redressing their grievances. But the road to Jerusalem lies through Amman, not Kuwait City. And with the failure of the intifada to dislodge the Israelis, it is small wonder that the promise of aid from Saddam would be desperately seized. Unfortunately, the promises of the Arab world to aid the Palestinians have proved the weakest of reeds, while as in the 1930s, Palestinian efforts at self-help, have proven just as ineffectual.

<sup>165</sup> See for example "Palestinian position 'pains' Jewish leftists," *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 1 September 1990, p. 2. Cf. "CRM still backs talks with Arabs," *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 8 September 1990, p. 5.

<sup>166</sup> This proposal in the context of the upper echelons of the Israeli state can be traced to Ben Gurion in 1948. See Benny Morris, *The Birth of the Palestine Refugee Problem, 1947-1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

<sup>167</sup> Among the numerous adherents of this view are Ariel Sharon and the New York Times columnist A. M. Rosenthal. For a good overview, see "The Partition Of A People," *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 10 October 1987, p. 8.

election. And this may well prove the ultimate tragedy for the original, all-embracing, Kookist ideology of redemption held by the core leaders of Gush Emunim.

I shall send terror of myself ahead of you; I shall throw all the peoples you encounter into confusion, and all your enemies take to their heels.

I shall send hornets ahead of you to drive Hivite, Canaanite and Hittite out before you.

I shall not drive them out ahead of you in a single year, or the land might become a desert where wild animals would multiply to your cost.

I shall drive them out little by little before you, until your numbers grow sufficient for you to take possession of the land. [Exodus 23:27-29]

## Part II

## Messianism vs. Fundamentalism: The Soul Of Gush Emunim

*Therefore, when the Bringer of Tidings [the Messiah] comes, he will first go to the cave of Machpela [in Hebron]. Prophecy from Palestine, c. 5th century.*<sup>168</sup>

*Fifty years ago our opponents argued about Jaffa, today they argue about Alfei Menashe; in another fifty years they will argue with us about Amman. That's the way it is. Rabbi Moshe Levinger*<sup>169</sup>

To locate, within the context of Judaism the Gush Emunim movement on a map with normative Judaism, diverse as it is, at the center and messianism and fundamentalism at the peripheries, is no easy task. There exists at this writing no widely accepted, definitive scholarly agreement as to the precise definition of fundamentalism, nor even that the term is applicable beyond its original Protestant Christian context.<sup>170</sup> To further

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<sup>168</sup> Raphael Patai, *The Messiah Texts*, p. 46.

<sup>169</sup> David Grossman, *The Yellow Wind* (New York: Farrar, Strausse and Giroux, 1988).

<sup>170</sup> For an excellent historical review of the fundamentalist phenomenon on its Protestant context, see Nancy J. Ammerman. "North American Protestant Fundamentalism," in Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, eds., *Fundamentalism Observed*. A good recent study of the doctrinal tenets of Protestant fundamentalism is Kathleen C. Boone, *The Bible Tells Them So* (Albany: N.Y.:SUNY, 1989). There have in recent years been an avalanche of studies purporting to present fundamentalism within the context of a given religious tradition. Few comparative studies have been attempted however. An excellent, early attempt was by Hava Lazarus-Yafeh, "Contemporary Fundamentalism-Judaism, Christianity, Islam," *Jerusalem Quarterly* 47 (Summer 1988). Another notable effort was Bruce Lawrence, *Defenders of God* (New York: Harper & Row, 1989). Lawrence and Lazarus-Yafeh both attempted to posit certain characteristics common to fundamentalist movements of different traditions, although both suffer somewhat from the difficulty of a single scholar commanding a knowledge of varied religious traditions commensurate with the task. Several collections of articles of varying qualities have recently appeared which seek to alleviate this problem by soliciting articles from specialists and tying them together with introductory and concluding remarks. See Lionel Caplan, ed., *Studies in Religious Fundamentalism* (Albany, N.Y.:SUNY, 1987); and the far better Norman J. Cohen, ed., *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990). An attempt to compare Gush Emunim in particular to Sunni fundamentalism from the perspective of an Islamist was Eric Davis, "Religion and State: A Political Economy of Religious Radicalism in Egypt and Israel," in Richard T. Antoun and

complicate matters, modern Judaism, in contrast to either Sunni or Shi'i Islam,<sup>171</sup> lacks an orthodoxy with regard to messianism. Instead, Judaism, in its long vigil for the coming of messianic redemption, and in its disastrous experience of messianic excitements, have developed not only numerous strands of messianic belief, but a powerful tradition of rabbinic suppression of messianism in all but its most distant and abstract forms.<sup>172</sup>

Despite these conceptual constraints, it is possible to offer at least the tentative conclusion that, as a result of the ad hoc structure of Gush Emunim, as well as the influence of the teachings of the two rabbis Kook, the organization has emerged with a foot in each camp, that of Jewish messianism and that of fundamentalism.<sup>173</sup> In its early years, from the mid to late 1970s, its messianic elements predominated, although influential fundamentalist currents were clearly visible and powerfully contending for the soul of the Gush. By the 1980s, in the years before the outbreak of the intifada, these fundamentalist

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Mary Elaine Hegland, *Religious Resurgence* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1987).

<sup>171</sup> An excellent, recent source on Shi'i messianic traditions is Abdulaziz Abdulhussein Sachedina, *Islamic Messianism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1981). A good, brief, recent source on Sunni traditions of messianism is F. A. Klein, *The Religion of Islam* (London: Curzon Press, 1985), although still unsurpassed as a source is A.J. Wensinck, *A Handbook of Early Muhammadan Tradition* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1927).

<sup>172</sup> Gershom G. Scholem, *The Messianic Idea in Judaism*, pp. 21-33.

<sup>173</sup> Several researchers have recently grappled with this question, with widely divergent results. Gideon Aran seems to find elements of both messianism and fundamentalism in Gush Emunim, but makes no definitive case for such a finding. Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism." Ehud Sprinzak in 1988 felt that GE was both messianic and fundamentalist, but more recently has tended towards a more fundamentalist interpretation. Ehud Sprinzak, "Fundamentalism, Terrorism and Democracy: The Emergence of Gush Emunim," *New Outlook*, (September/October, 1988), p. 11; and Idem., "Three Models of Religious Violence: The Case of Jewish Fundamentalism In Israel," in Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, eds., *Remaking the World*. Conversely, Micheal Rosenak sees the organization as messianic while Charles Liebman opts for fundamentalism, as does Janet O'Dea Aviad. See Michael Rosenak, "Jewish Fundamentalism in Israeli Education," in Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, eds., *Remaking the World*; Charles S. Liebman. "Jewish Fundamentalism and the Israeli Polity," in Ibid.; and Janet O'Dea, "Gush Emunim: Roots and Ambiguities, The Perspective of the Sociology of Religion," *Forum* 2 (1976), p. 47.

forces came to dominate both the public and private personas of the movement, although the more messianic adherents of the organization, increasingly detached from the activities of the movement, remained a powerful influence.

To attempt to demonstrate this conclusion, this paper will utilize the 'ideal form' construct of fundamentalism offered by Martin Marty and R. Scott Appleby in the conclusion to the first of a projected five volume series of global studies of fundamentalism undertaken for the National Academy of Arts and Sciences.<sup>174</sup> Gush Emunim will be measured against a scale comprising twenty-three 'family resemblances' linking fundamentalist or fundamentalist-like movements across the globe which are offered in this construct with the object of determining precisely the accuracy of Gush Emunim's characterization as a fundamentalist movement.

Jewish Messianism, by its very nature, is a far more difficult case to make. This chapter will briefly seek to demonstrate however, that some Gush Emunim adherents, by their ideology and actions, do fit the within the traditions of Jewish messianism. To do this, this chapter will attempt to fit within the ideal construct of modern fundamentalism those areas where key members of Gush Emunim tend to diverge from the fundamentalist model and embark instead on the path of Jewish messianism. This is at best a tentative methodology, seeking to offer more the implication than the evidence of messianism, but within the limits of this study, it is the best that can presently be posited.

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<sup>174</sup> Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby. "Conclusion: An Interim Report on a Hypothetical Family," In Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, eds., *Fundamentalism Observed*.

A Fundamentalist Typology<sup>175</sup>

The great faith in the divine inherent in the heart of the Jew is beyond assessment and beyond comparison. Even Jewish heresy is permeated with faith and with holiness, more so than all the religions of the nations. Though it expresses sentiments of levity and atheistic denials, in the inner realm of the soul there is present the divine light of yearning for the living God, and attachment to Him to a point of readiness for self sacrifice.-Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook<sup>176</sup>

1. Religious idealism, that belief that if only the prescriptions of a given group were to be scrupulously applied, a dramatic and entirely positive change would occur in the fabric of life not only for the group's adherents, but for the whole world, is posited as a central characteristic of fundamentalism. If the original core adherents of Gush Emunim<sup>177</sup> had a single distinguishing characteristic, it was their extreme idealism. Very much rooted in the teachings of Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, the religious aspects of this idealism were manifested in a number of ways. First, in keeping with the elder Kook's unique theology, Gush Emunim sees the presence of holiness, of the 'divine spark', in the Jewish people as whole, even those who to all intents and purposes are atheists.<sup>178</sup> Further, Rabbi Kook held that as the three signs of the redemptive Messianic Age had been achieved, that is, the

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<sup>175</sup> Ibid. All categories of this typology are drawn from Marty and Appleby, and will not be further footnoted.

<sup>176</sup> Ben Zion Bokser, trans. and ed., *Abraham Isaac Kook*, p. 142.

<sup>177</sup> The concept of core and peripheral adherents of Gush Emunim is owed to Gideon Aran, Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism." A core member of Gush Emunim is defined as a member of the highly cohesive group who had been with the organization from its inception, yeshiva educated (most at Yeshiva Mercaz Herav under Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook), a record of army service, an unerring belief in the teachings of the rabbis Kook and quite often rabbis in their own rite. While not all of the original adherents of Gush Emunim meet this description, most of those who rose to positions of influence and public visibility do share all of these characteristics.

<sup>178</sup> Ben Zion Bokser, trans. and ed., *Abraham Isaac Kook*, p. 20; Charles S. Liebman and Eliezer Don-Yehiya, *Religion and Politics in Israel* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), p. 20; Lilly Weissbrod, "Gush Emunim Ideology--From Religious Doctrine to Political Action," *Middle Eastern Studies* 18 (July 1982), p. 268.



conquest of the land, political sovereignty and the ingathering of the exiles, redemption had been accomplished.<sup>179</sup> It is this view that we are living now in the messianic age which lies at the root of Gush Emunim's religious idealism.

With the teachings of the late Zvi Yehuda Kook, then head of Mercaz Herav Yeshiva, this religious optimism was transformed from an all embracing theology of redemption to a fundamentalist emphasis on but one aspect of redemption: the Whole Land of Israel (Eretz Yisrael). In essence, this formulation held that only with the reclaiming of the entire biblical patrimony of Israel could the process of redemption, now underway, be completed. With the Jewish people restored to the Land, the full ingathering of the exiles, the rebuilding of the Temple, the achievement of full sovereignty of the Jews in their Land free from outside (i.e. American) pressure or interference, the longed for fruits of the messianic age would come of themselves.<sup>180</sup> Emerging from Mercaz Herav armed with the teachings of the rabbis Kook after the war of 1967, the core adherents of Gush Emunim demonstrated an idealism in their early settlement efforts which was altogether remarkable. The belief that the Israeli government, then under the Labor Party's Levi Eshkol would eventually come around to their point of view was unremarkable. What was, to the uninitiated, of far greater note was the absolute confidence of the first wave of settlers that the Arab population of the Occupied Territories would come to recognize the Holiness of the settlement enterprise, and would at minimum remain passive observers of the Jewish

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<sup>179</sup> Uriel Tal, "The Symbolic and the Sacred," *Oz VeShalom* 7-8 (Summer/Fall, 1986), p. 35.

<sup>180</sup> Charles S. Liebman and Eliezer Don-Yehiya, *Civil Religion in Israel*, pp. 195-199; Eliezer Don-Yehiya, "Messianic Theology and Radical Politics," *Morasha* 2 (Spring/Summer 1988), pp. 40-41. It is important to note that Judaism's multiple traditions render it impossible to posit with certainty precisely what form the age of full redemption will take. A good introduction to this diversity is offered in Raphael Patai, *The Messiah Texts*, chs. 21-27.

redemption--it was after all of universal benefit--or at best, actively assist in the settlement enterprise.<sup>181</sup> As R. Levinger has it:

Settlement of the entire Land of Israel by the Jewish People is a blessing for all mankind, including the Arabs. Jewish settlements in the midst of local population centers are motivated by feelings of respect and concern for the Palestinians' future. Consequently, if we meet the Arabs' demand for withdrawal, we will only encourage their degeneration and moral decline, whereas enforcing the Israeli national will on the Arabs will foster a religious revival among them, eventually to be expressed in their spontaneous desire to join in the reconstruction of the Third [Jewish] Temple. We [the Israelis] must penetrate the casbahs of cities in Judea and Samaria and drive our stakes therein for the good of the Arabs themselves.<sup>182</sup>

And this feeling of religious idealism was no mere academic construct-- it was fully and consciously a part of the Movement. In the words of Rabbi Levinger, reflecting on those early days:

The large movement that came in the aftermath of the 12 settlements [1977] developed from a general feeling of idealism.<sup>183</sup>

2. It is characteristic of fundamentalists that sacred text is the basis for a view of revealed truth as whole, unified and undifferentiated. In this area, Gush Emunim is not typical of other forms of fundamentalism, in that while the adherents of the Movement indeed study and honor *Halacha* (Jewish Law), in practice the concentration is on only that part of the legal heritage which regards the integrity and inalienability of the Land as preeminent over

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<sup>181</sup> Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism," ; Ehud Sprinzak, "Three Models of Religious Violence: The Case of Jewish Fundamentalism In Israel."

<sup>182</sup> Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism."

<sup>183</sup> Rabbi Moshe Levinger, "From Messiah-Son-of-Joseph to Messiah-Son-of David," p. 15.

all other law, even that of preserving life.<sup>184</sup> Thus while on the theoretical level Gush Emunim does accept the the 'seamless garment' of *Halacha*, and the preeminence of inerrant text, the written and oral Torah alike, so intense is the Movement's attachment to the recovery of the full biblical patrimony of Israel that little attention is given to the complexities and ambiguities of the many-faceted tradition(s) which comprise the Jewish heritage.<sup>185</sup>

Thus, while at the rhetorical level Gush Emunim would, and often has, made claims to be heir to a textual tradition which is unified and undifferentiated, such claims in the context of Judaism are, even for the Heredim, difficult to sustain. With 613 points of *Halacha* to follow, the meaning of many of which have long since been lost, and the utility of others suspended by the destruction of the Second Temple, Judaism would be less inclined to appeal to undifferentiated text than Islam or Christianity. Rather, a tradition of Jewish mysticism has held out the hope that, once the redemption process has been completed, a new Torah will be provided by God. This new Torah, presumably, will be shorn of commandments whose utility in the messianic age has lapsed.<sup>186</sup> It may well be

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<sup>184</sup> Compare this concentration on the Land with the more fully fundamentalist groups of Heredim, who give equal weight and force to all 613 laws of *Halacha*. See Samuel C. Heilman & Menachem Friedman, "Religious Fundamentalism and Religious Jews: The Case of the Heredim," In Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, eds., *Fundamentalism Observed*.

<sup>185</sup> Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism,"; Uriel Tal, "Historical and Metahistorical Self-Views in Religious Zionism," *Religious Zionism: Challenge and Choices* (Jerusalem: Oz VeShalom Publications, n.d.), pp. 10-11; Yosseph Shilhav, "Interpretation and Misinterpretation of Jewish Territorialism," in David Newman, ed., *The Impact of Gush Emunim*, pp. 121-122. For a good, lively debate involving these Halachic issues, see the recent debate between Rabbi J. David Bleich and Rabbi Aaron M. Schrieber. Rabbi J. David Bleich, "Of Land, Peace, and the Divine Command," *Journal of Halacha and Contemporary Society* XVI (Fall 1988) and Rabbi J. David Bleich, "Withdrawal From Liberated Territories as a Viable Halachic Option," *Journal of Halacha and Contemporary Society* XVIII (Fall 1989), vs. Rabbi Aaron M. Schrieber, "Relinquishing Yehudah and Shomron: A Response to Rabbi Bleich," *Journal of Halacha and Contemporary Society* XVIII (Fall 1989).

<sup>186</sup> There is a textual basis of this belief, hinging on an interpretation of Isaiah 51:4 which most sources, including the New Jerusalem Bible, hold to be "for a law [Torah] shall come from Me," but has been variously interpreted as "a new Torah shall go forth from Me,"

that it is on this promise of a new Law that Gush Emunim's only partial acceptance of sacred text as whole and undifferentiated may be understood. Indeed, it may be in this view that the messianic aspect of Gush Emunim overshadows the fundamentalism of the Movement.

3. Where Gush Emunim excels is in the area of behaviors which are by the norms of the contemporary West, intentionally scandalous in that they violate standards of rationality and decorum. From their earliest public manifestation, the 1968 occupation of the Park Hotel in Hebron, through the first true Gush Emunim actions as the Elon Moreh group made repeated attempts to settle the abandoned rail station at Sebastia in 1974, Israeli and foreign audiences alike have been alternately thrilled and appalled at the antics, and appearance, of the group's adherents.

The external aspects of Gush Emunim may first draw attention to the movement's intent to scandalize 'respectable' society. Gideon Aran, a participant observer of the movement, describes this well:

During the mid-1970s, public attention in Israel turned to a band of skullcapped and bearded young men, assault rifles on their shoulders and rabbinic texts in their hands. They spent their nights in the territories conquered and administered by the Israeli Defense Forces since the 1967 war. There they skillfully outmaneuvered or aggressively attacked soldiers and then compelled them to join in an ecstatic Hasidic dance. Joined by their wives and numerous babies, they pitched tents as they repeated the sermons of an aging Rabbi. In the mornings, they marched through Arab towns...They covered the public squares of large cities with placards, lay down in front of the vehicles of visiting foreign ministers, and shouted their anguish through loudspeakers to disrupt the Prime Minister's daily routine. Between, and even during, these campaigns, they studied the Torah intensively and prayed with great devotion.

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See Gershom G. Scholem, *The Messianic Idea in Judaism*, p. 55; Raphael Patai, *The Messiah Texts*, pp. 247-257. For a complex, early history of this belief, see Ephraim E. Urbach, *The Sages*, pp. 295-297.

Initially the phenomenon was described as lunatic, esoteric, episodic, and marginal. Observers expressed their amazement or disdain.  
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At a deeper level however, there is at work a conception of time which is radically at odds with that of Western culture. How could it be otherwise in the age of redemption? For core adherents of Gush Emunim, time has ceased to be perceived as a linear progression, proceeding invariably from past to present to future. Rather, biblical time is our time, Jewish history is a pattern which serves neither as the property of the academy, nor as a basis for moral teachings, nor as a form of cyclicity which, as in the Asian conception, will recur in some form. Quite literally, in the organization's conception, events of two millennia ago are as fresh as if they had happened but yesterday, or are occurring today.<sup>188</sup> Consider but one of the numerous examples which could be given; the 1984 call from Rabbi Eliezer Waldman to a group of supporters at an evening rally: "Gentlemen, the time has come for morning prayers." To the initiated, the meaning was clear, for this was in the book of Passover prayers a call by R. Akiva to his students to rise in revolt in 132 A.D.<sup>189</sup> Or in referring to our introductory biblical text, Genesis 34 noting the rape of Dinah, GE adherents met during the intifada to determine if a state of war existed, for if so, the harming of a Jew could well bring down on Shechem (Nablus) the unfortunate fate which befell those earlier neighbors of the Jewish people.<sup>190</sup>

These behaviors, from the dress which sets them apart, the conception of time which in turn sets the parameters of their view of the world, and the forms of speech which

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<sup>187</sup> Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism."

<sup>188</sup> Ibid.

<sup>189</sup> Shulamith Hareven, "Anatomy of a Deviation," *Jerusalem Quarterly* 36 (Summer 1985), p. 123.

<sup>190</sup> Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism."

constitute an in-group language fully comprehensible only to those possessing an advanced yeshiva education, mark the boundaries separating the Movement's core adherents from the mass of Israeli society.<sup>191</sup> When combined with the very act of settlement itself, involving a physical separation from Israeli society and constituting in the view of many Israelis--and almost all outsiders if United Nations debates and resultant resolutions are to be believed, the most intentionally scandalous form of behavior of all--these boundary markers become increasingly clearly delineated, if not yet completely unbridgeable. More, this isolation is to the good, for:

To be thus comprehended by outsiders would be to suffer reduction to the social, economic or psychological categories of credentialed unbelievers disrespectful or ignorant of the 'sacred spark'...which animates and brings meaning to human existence.<sup>192</sup>

4. As Marty and Appleby point out, these intentionally scandalous behaviors which appear so clearly in forming an ideal model of fundamentalism, are in real life often modified considerably.<sup>193</sup> Nevertheless, it is precisely this extremism which provides a kind of rite

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<sup>191</sup> It should be noted in this regard that while Gush Emunim's support in the wider Israeli society is quite limited, there remains a large constituency for settlement itself. The reasons for this support are largely instrumental, as opposed to GE's theological motivations, and are motivated by a complex of factors ranging from security concerns to a perceived need for West Bank resources. See Ehud Sprinzak, "The Iceberg Model of Political Extremism," and Idem., "Gush Emunim: The Tip of the Iceberg." For a good analysis of Sprinzak's model of Gush Emunim as only the visible tip of the iceberg, with a large undercurrent of support which is not so readily visible to the observer, see Kevin Avruch, "The Iceberg Model of Extremism Reconsidered," *Middle East Review* 1 (Fall 1989). The post-1977 movement to settle the West Bank for non-ideological reasons provides the major link between settlers and Israeli society, and explains the apparent contradiction between widespread support for settlement and the self-drawn boundaries separating Gush Emunim from the mainstream currents of Israeli society.

<sup>192</sup> Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, "Conclusion: An Interim Report on a Hypothetical Family."

<sup>193</sup> Many settlers on the West Bank today complain bitterly about the stereotype held by most secular Israelis of settlers as wild-eyed messianists, fanatically preparing the way for the coming of the messiah. In fact, the the 'Kookist' core group identified with Gush Emunim is a small minority. On settler resentments of this stereotype, the documentation is legion. See for example, "Settlement rabbi meets PLO man, sparks row," *Jerusalem Post*

of initiation for aspirants to membership, as well as a kind of ongoing symbol of commitment which serves simultaneously to provide a boundary between the group and outsiders. Gush Emunim in its early years did closely fit this model in some ways, but at the peak of its popularity and influence, in the mid to late 1970s, it sought not to succumb to the self-drawn boundaries separating the organization from the Israeli society of which GE sees itself as a kind of vanguard. This effort however, was doomed by its own inherent contradictions. The religious space separating Gush Emunim from Israeli society has been combined, at the onset of the intifada, with a sense of isolation felt by settlers as their personal ties to friends and relatives within the Green Line have waned in proportion to the sense of danger perceived by Israelis contemplating visiting the Territories. Thus, the boundaries are reinforced and the ultimate litmus test for in-group identification has come to be seen in merely staying in the Territories, which in turn is increasingly perceived by Israelis and outsiders as wildly scandalous.<sup>194</sup>

The key to understanding this dichotomy is once again to be found in the teachings of the rabbis Kook. Gush Emunim sees the Jewish people as inherently holy, as bearers of prophesy, and this is no less true of the most secular resident of Tel Aviv than it is of the most religious settler in Kiryat Arba in Hebron. All that is needed is time, and a proper example, for all Jews to recognize within themselves this inherent holiness.<sup>195</sup> In practice, this theory is best demonstrated in the zeal which the adherents have shown in

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*International Edition*, 7 October 1989, p. 7; "Immigrants Settle on West Bank," *Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 12 December 1987, p. 7; and for in depth analysis of settler attitudes, see David Weisburd, *Jewish Settler Violence: Deviance and Social Reaction*. (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1989) and David Weisburd and Elin Waring, "Settlement Motivations in the Gush Emunim Movement: Comparing Bonds of Altruism and Self Interest," in David Newman, ed., *The Impact of Gush Emunim*.

<sup>194</sup> Numerous sources can be found for this perception--one merely needs to read the Israeli press. See for example, the following articles in *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, "Who are the Victims? A settler's perspective," 13 February 1988, p. 1; "Don't bother me with reality," *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 2 April 1988, p. 12; etc.

<sup>195</sup> Eliezer Don-Yehiya, "Messianic Theology and Radical Politics," p. 40.

joining the armed forces, and in distinguishing themselves in battle.<sup>196</sup> In the settlement movement itself, there was a great early thrust towards bridging a gulf in Israeli society that had never before been attempted, the smooth integration of secular and Orthodox Israelis in a single, cohesive community.

Conversely, the very act of settlement, entailing as it did in those pioneering days the abandonment of comfortable homes and secure lives, was in and of itself a powerful litmus test, reaffirming the group's all-embracing commitment and separating itself physically as well as spiritually, from the people of Israel. Left behind too, as in the model of the Messiahs Ben-Joseph and Ben-David, was the precursor of settlement in the newly occupied lands, the Land of Israel Movement. This group of largely secular intellectuals, embracing a wide swath of the Israeli political spectrum, would remain behind in the salons of Tel Aviv or in the halls of academia in Jerusalem, and would there fade into obscurity as the adherents of Gush Emunim pushed forward the settlement enterprise. Even of those secular, or religious but non-Orthodox, individuals who did heed Gush Emunim's call to settle, few would long remain in mixed settlements. Today, with the Mercaz Herav core leaders in a decided minority of settlers, and the leadership of most individual settlements in the hands of Orthodox, although non-Kookist individuals, this separation is nearly complete.<sup>197</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> This is in stark contrast to the refusal of the Heredim, a-Zionist and anti-Zionist alike, to serve in the armed forces. All of the core members of GE have served in the IDF and have often volunteered for the most dangerous front line units. The best example is Hanan Porat, perhaps the most charismatic public face of the Kookist core leadership, who in 1967 was in the vanguard of the paratroop force which took the Old City of Jerusalem, and in the most daring operation of the 1973 war followed General Ariel Sharon across the Sinai Canal in the flanking maneuver that effectively turned the tide of battle. In that operation, Porat was seriously wounded. Moshe Kohn, "'Settle the Land and mend the nation'," *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 4 August 1976, p. 5.

<sup>197</sup> See for a good, brief study on the secular/religious dimension of settlement Julien Bauer, "A New Approach to Religious-Secular Relationships?," in David Newman, ed., *The Impact of Gush Emunim*.



In sum then, Gush Emunim only partially fits this category of fundamentalism. Given the Gush's loose, 'state-of-mind' organizational structure, lacking any formal requirements for membership, largely eschewing organized meetings, and until recently operating with an organized leadership in only the loosest sense of the word,<sup>198</sup> consistency in the sense of strong in-group solidarity would be too much to expect. With the hardening of ideological positions following the amazing rise of the Likud coalition in the late 1970s, coupled with the failure of the Kookist vision embraced by Gush Emunim to bridge the secular/Orthodox divide, identification with Gush Emunim as an organized entity had the effect of marking an individual as outside the boundaries of Israeli society, spiritually as well as physically.

5. The fifth characteristic of fundamentalism is the importance of dramatic eschatological scenarios to the adherents. As we have seen, there can be no better example than that of the Kookist view that we are living now in the time of redemption, and the activities of Gush Emunim in reclaiming the full biblical patrimony of Eretz Yisrael is serving to advance, meter by meter, the culmination of that redemption. It is in this sense that we can understand Hanan Porat's exhilaration:

Hanan Porat...suddenly left his companions, pulled up a few poles marking the area [of a new settlement] and began running wildly towards

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<sup>198</sup> Hanan Porat best explains this early organizational ethos:

Furthermore, until recently [1976] we deliberately maintained a loose, voluntaristic framework. We did not want to institutionalize ourselves with membership cards and all that.

We wanted people to feel that their contribution to the cause does not consist in carrying a membership card, but their 'card' is the acts they perform: settlement, cash contributions, participating in demonstrations and marches, volunteering to do work in the office, or at settlement sites, including guard duty. But now we see that we need to deal more systematically with things.

Moshe Kohn, "The NRP and the Gush," *The Jerusalem Post*, 6 August 1976, p. 5.

the nearby hills. He drove the poles into the earth there to expand the area of the future settlement and then, as though possessed, pulled them up again and drove them into the hillside even farther away. When he returned to the original place, panting and puffing, he exclaimed: "We just extended the area of redemption." The others cheered: "He stole another piece of redemption."<sup>199</sup>

Beyond the very fact that the redemptive era is now underway, there exists little agreement on the precise nature of redemption itself. In this, Gush Emunim transcends in a sense the boundaries separating modern fundamentalist from historical Jewish messianic movements. Before the advent of Reform Judaism, there was a pronounced (albeit minority) strand of Jewish messianic belief, which sought to transcend the personalized vision of the Messiahs Ben Joseph and Ben David, and to identify redemption as a process rather than a dramatic series of concrete historical events whose result would be a dramatic separation of history and metahistory.<sup>200</sup> In following this path by allowing for redemption as a gradual, almost imperceptible process, Gush Emunim presents a pronounced analytical problem in terms of the Marty-Appleby model of fundamentalism. Does such a gradual scenario constitute a 'dramatic' eschatology? Most definitely, in the view of the adherents of the Kookist ideology taught at Mercav Herav yeshiva, that is, the core leaders of Gush Emunim, it does present a dramatic and exciting eschatological view.<sup>201</sup>

For those lacking this specialized training however, the answer is not so clear. Such gradualism is not the stuff which can provide an ongoing sense of motivation to most

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<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

<sup>200</sup> Gershom G. Scholem, "Toward an Understanding of the Messianic Idea in Judaism," in Gershom G. Scholem, *The Messianic Idea in Judaism*; Raphael Patai, *The Messiah Texts*, ch. 1; and Eliezer Schweid, "Jewish Messianism: Metamorphoses of an Idea," *Jerusalem Quarterly* 36 (Summer 1985).

<sup>201</sup> For the flavor of this eschatological view, see Ehud Dor, "Hanan Porat Returns to Politics," and Rabbi Moshe Levinger, "From Messiah-Son-of-Joseph to Messiah-Son-of David."

people. Impatient by nature, most settlers, having given up comfortable lives in the cities, might require something more heady than the assurance of a redemptive process whose pace is all but imperceptible. It is in this impatience that we can understand two offshoots of the Gush Emunim: the emergence of vigilante groups in the Occupied Territories seeking to assure the absolute security of Jews in 'their' Land, and the Jewish Underground, seeking in its original conception to hasten the redemption process by ridding the world of the 'abomination'--the mosque on the Temple Mount.

We must therefore, posit only a qualified finding of the presence of a dramatic eschatology in Gush Emunim.

6. These dramatic eschatologies are, according to the model, suitably supported with sacred text and tradition, and applied to real life situations. In the context of Gush Emunim, this is easier to see than in most fundamentalisms due to the dramatic events in the Jewish state itself. In this age of redemption, every major event takes on of itself a supernormal caste: the history of Israel is truly in this conception the history of the world writ large. And for Gush Emunim, it was the two wars, 1967 and 1973, which best illustrate this point.<sup>202</sup> 1967 is in fact posited by most Gush Emunim adherents as the true catalyst of the movement, while no less an authority than Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook held that truly this was the year 0, the first year of Israel's redemption.<sup>203</sup> For the denizen's of Mercaz Herav, the victory not only demonstrated conclusively that, as in the days of King

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<sup>202</sup> The 1948 victory is certainly posited by the younger Kook, who dispatched his students in Mercaz Herav to fight in that war, as important, although not the genuine beginning of the redemptive era. It is not included in this analysis as the core leaders of GE were at the time too young to partake in this victory of secular Zionism. See Moshe Kohn, "The roots go back to the 'fifties," p. 5; Gideon Aran, "A Mystic-Messianic Interpretation of Modern Israeli History," p. 264.

<sup>203</sup> Gideon Aran, "A Mystic-Messianic Interpretation of Modern Israeli History," p. 265; Uriel Tal, "Historical and Metahistorical Self-Views in Religious Zionism," *Religious Zionism: Challenge and Choices* 1 (Jerusalem: Oz VeShalom Publications, n.d.), p. 9.

David, God's hand at last could be once again seen directly guiding the affairs of His chosen people, but that by God's grace the spirit of prophesy had touched their own R., Zvi Yehuda. For in May, 1967, only weeks before the war, the younger Kook, at the annual Mercaz Herav reunion, held on the Israeli National Day, began an oration on the subject of the "The State of Israel's Psalm 19." He began in dirge like tones to bemoan Israel's having forgotten Eretz Yisrael, then his voice rises dramatically in mourning for Hebron, Shechem [Nablus] and Jericho, finishing with a tirade against those (i.e. Naturei Karta) who ignored the exhortations of past sages to love Eretz Yisrael and its role in the messianic process. This occasioned flood of weeping and breast beating among listeners.<sup>204</sup> Unsurprisingly, when the war broke out and ended in the acquisition of territory, Kook was considered by those who heard him to have been an inspired prophet.<sup>205</sup>

The shocking, if temporary, success of the Egyptian forces in 1973 logically should have given pause to an eschatological interpretation of the post-1967 Israeli history. However, quite the opposite seems to have happened, for in Jewish Messianic tradition, such bloodletting and such obvious setbacks as the Camp David Accords and the eventual return of the Sinai, were but the expected 'birth pangs of the messiah'.<sup>206</sup> Gideon Aran suggests, from a more contemporary academic model, that the phenomenon sometimes referred to as 'cognitive dissonance' which has effected Christianity, and probably Islam as well, whereby a crisis event in which the believer's faith is tested to the limit, forcing that

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<sup>204</sup> Moshe Kohn, "The roots go back to the 'fifties," p. 5; Gideon Aran, "A Mystic-Messianic Interpretation of Modern Israeli History," p. 265.

<sup>205</sup> Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism." Aran points out that tapes of this oration are still played at Gush Emunim functions to inspire the Movement.

<sup>206</sup> On the terrors of these terrestrial dislocations, see Raphael Patai, *The Messiah Texts*, ch. 11; Gershom G. Scholem, *The Messianic Idea in Judaism*, p. 10; and for specific historical precedents of such an interpretation of calamity, see Abba Hillel Silver, *The History of Messianic Speculation in Israel* (New York: Macmillan & Co., 1927), p. 109 and 151.

adherent to rationalize an obvious disaster into a form of divine testing from which the believer or group will, with faith, emerge triumphant, may too have been at work.<sup>207</sup> In 1973, a number of such interpretations arose from the bewildered adherents of religious settlement, of which once again the Ben Joseph/Ben-David motif predominated. For what fell in 1973 was none other than the empty husk of secular Zionism, giving way at last to the mighty, redemptive spirit of religious Zionism,<sup>208</sup> just as the elder Kook predicted it would. And it was only months later, in 1974, that a conference at Kfar Etzion would formalize and name the emergent Gush Emunim organization.

7. A manichaen view of an enemy figure, often characterized by almost superhuman powers and capabilities, is typical of fundamentalist movements. It is remarkable that Gush Emunim's core leaders tend to a great degree to eschew this trap. Why this should be is an interesting matter for conjecture, although no definitive explanation could be posited from the available data. Certainly, the philosophy of the elder R. Kook is important: his view of universal redemption flowing from the redemption of the Jews, coupled with the view that the days of redemption have already begun, would do much to inhibit such an outlook. More fundamentally, in the wake of the Holocaust, there was a great emphasis in Zionist circles, Religious no less than Labor, on the need to create a 'New Jew', one no longer afflicted with the fears of the ghetto, the inwardness of the Shtetle, and a good part of this mental transformation is that of a Jew's ceasing to view himself as a victim, becoming instead the master of his own fate.<sup>209</sup> Such a view would

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<sup>207</sup> Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism." The reference is to L. Festinger et al., *When Prophecy Fails*.

<sup>208</sup> Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism."

<sup>209</sup> Good discussions of these issues may be found in Yosef Salmon, "Religious Zionism Between Tradition and Modernity," *Jerusalem Quarterly* 52 (Fall 1989); Michael Rosenak, "Jewish Fundamentalism in Israeli Education," in Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, eds., *Remaking the World*; Lilly Weissbrod, "Core Values and Revolutionary Change," pp. 81-87; and for an ideological look at this problem as it relates to the

clearly inhibit the development of the picture of an omnipresent and inhumanly powerful enemy. Yet it is obvious that Israel at present exists in an extremely hostile environment, the consistent pattern of military victories, as well as the day to day perception of power, unconscious until the intifada, derived from ruling a conquered population of Arabs on the West Bank and Gaza Strip would not contribute to the manichaeian tendency to inflate the power of a perceived foe. In this vein, the influence Israelis and Arabs alike perceive American Jews to have in government and media circles in the United States would certainly mitigate against the development of such a mytholization of the perceived enemy.

Even when that enemy is internal, the very success of the settlement movement would again preclude the development of a Gush Emunim demonology. Thus, the Heredim who despise the Zionist enterprise and the adherent of Gush Emunim for a variety or the Peace Now adherent who in recent years has emerged as the major propaganda target of Gush Emunim, remain small and rather insignificant foes;<sup>210</sup> especially in light of the primacy of the optimism of Kookist ideology in the movement.

Ironically, that such a demonology is now emerging from the settlements, is a prime evidence of the gradual decline of Gush Emunim influence over much of the movement which the general public still associates with the it's name. For now it is the growing presence of followers of the late R. Kahane's Kach movement at key settlements, especially at Kiryat Arba in Hebron, who have brought from Kahane's limited ideological baggage a true demonology which sees Gentiles as Jew-Haters all, and Arabs as inherently evil, and thus the entire world as vastly powerful, incurably anti-Semitic, and thus doomed to ruin in the End of Days.<sup>211</sup>

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Holocaust, Rosemary Rudford Ruether and Herman J. Ruether, *The Wrath of Jonah* (New York: Harper & Row, 1989), ch. 7.

<sup>210</sup> Ian Lustick, *For the Land and the Lord*, p. 139.

<sup>211</sup> The influence of Kach Party members in the settlement movement is an important phenomenon. A number of articles and press clippings could be posited here, but see for example "Settlers take action," *The Jerusalem Post*, 6 March 1987, p. 3; and "The new

8. Following from the recognition of an overpowering, utterly irredeemable enemy, comes the imperative to identify, isolate and negate that enemy. That this orientation never developed among most of the core adherents of Gush Emunim is a natural consequence of the Kookist recognition of the divine spark in all Jewish people. With such an ideology of inevitability, the idea of conflict with fellow Jews is, in theory, inconceivable. Further, with the younger Kook's near deification of the instrumentalities of Israeli statehood,<sup>212</sup> until the evacuation of Yamit in the Sinai as a result of the Camp David accords,<sup>213</sup> the idea of serious conflict with, let alone violence against, the Israeli government or its armed forces would not have occurred to Gush Emunim. Even in the wake of the 1982 violence at Yamit, the Organization's leadership concluded that while the government may be in error, so long as it did not decide to return the West Bank or halt *alia* (immigration), it remained the government of the Jewish people, and must be persuaded peacefully to follow the correct path to further the redemption process.<sup>214</sup>

Surprisingly, even under the pressure of the intifada, most Gush Emunim core adherents refused to identify the Arabs as such an enemy to be fought and destroyed. For most of these Kookists, the Arabs continued to have three choices: to accept wholeheartedly the Jewish state, accepting in the process citizenship with all its rights and

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militancy among the settlers," *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 27 May 1989, p. 4.

<sup>212</sup> Charles S. Liebman and Eliezer Don-Yehiya, *Civil Religion in Israel*, p. 198.

<sup>213</sup> An entire issue of the *Journal of Applied Behavioral Sciences* was devoted to examining the Sinai evacuation from the perspective of every conceivable discipline of the Social Sciences. The article concentrating on Gush Emunim's involvement was Gideon Aran and Micheal Feige, "The Price of Peace: The Removal of the Israeli Settlements in Sinai," *Journal of Applied Behavioral Sciences* (Special Issue, 1987).

<sup>214</sup> Myron J. Aronoff, "Gush Emunim: The Institutionalization of a Charismatic Religious-Political Revitalization Movement in Israel," in David Newman, ed., *The Impact of Gush Emunim*, p. 58,61.

obligations, resident alien status with full civil rights, or to accept financial incentives for immigration.<sup>215</sup> Thus, there is little evidence for the development of a contra-acculturative orientation within the ranks of Gush Emunim, which even today refuses to recognize the boundaries separating it from Israeli society. Rather, the Kookist view of the inevitable triumph of the religious over the secular spirit, as with the Messiah's Ben Joseph and Ben David, have inhibited the development of such an outlook. Further, the biblical model of conquest typified in Genesis 34 may well be an additional factor in inhibiting such a development, as even the primary boundary now separating the settlers from Israelis, the Green Line reinforced by the intifada, is seen as a transitory stage in the redemptive era. In this view, the reclaiming of the full patrimony of Israel is seen too as inevitable, and the history of Israeli expansion since 1948 would do little to gainsay such an interpretation.

9. Fundamentalists tend to set boundaries intended to keep at bay the contaminating influences of the outside world. Certainly, Gush Emunim in the very act of settlement of areas whose names they insist on revising, does set barriers between the Jewish people and their state, as the Gush conceives them, and the outside world. It is no accident that a particular image recurs constantly in GE's speeches and writings, and is among the most remarked upon by its severest critics:

...a people that dwells on it own  
not to be reckoned among other nations.<sup>216</sup>

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<sup>215</sup> Ehud Sprinzak, "The Iceberg Model of Political Extremism," p. 32. "Waiting for the Call," *The Jerusalem Post*, 13 March 1987; "Split in the Bloc," *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 23 May 1987, p. 7.

<sup>216</sup> Numbers 23:9. Ian Lustick, *For the Land and the Lord*, pp. 79-81, offers some interesting exegesis from Gush Emunim personalities on the importance of this passage.



Other, less formidable, boundaries than the territories under occupation may again be mentioned in this context; the knitted skull-caps, ritual fringe shirts hanging out of military fatigues with IDF issued combat boots *de rigueur*, *payasin* [ritual sidelocks], longish, curly hair with tangled beards popular in Kiryat Arba, large families, modest dress and extremely outspoken demeanor for the women.<sup>217</sup> Perhaps the most important boundary is the lifelong exposure to Torah learning and yeshiva-style debate among core members which often renders the Movement's statements, and even casual conversations, all but incomprehensible to outsiders, laden as it is with obscure textual references which given the adherents remarkable interpretation of time, often lends an other-worldly character to the group's pronouncements.<sup>218</sup>

It is a central irony of Gush Emunim that these boundaries have, even with the success of the West Bank settlement enterprise to date, isolated the organization from the Israeli nation that they seek to embrace, and the Israeli culture which they believe that they are destined to displace. Yet it remains a fact that the very success of settlement came not as a result of the exciting extralegal forays of Gush Emunim in the early 1970s, but instead as a result of the policy of the post-1977 Likud government which effectively used economic incentives to create settlement bedroom communities of Jerusalem and Tel

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<sup>217</sup> Gideon Aran offers a good picture of this element of GE. See Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism." Parts of this paragraph have been drawn from the author's own experience in Hebron from 1985-1987.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid. We have seen the example of Rabbi Eliezer Waldman's juxtaposition of time, as well as that of other adherents seeking to use the rape of Dinah as a precedent for handling the intifada. To these may be added the example of the confrontation at Yamit, in which having easily captured the attention of the media, Gush Emunim spokesmen expressed great frustration at being unable to convey their essentially religious messages through the media to the Israeli public. The root problem seems to have been one not of censorship, but of simple incomprehension of GE's understanding of time, and a lack of familiarity with the biblical and midrashic precedents offered by the group. Gadi Wolsfeld, "Protest and the Removal of Yamit: Ostentatious Political Action," *Journal of Applied Behavioral Sciences* (Special Issue, 1987), p. 114.

Aviv.<sup>219</sup> More, even the primary innovation of Gush Emunim, the mixed secular/Orthodox settlement failed to last. The secular/National Orthodox chasm was simply too great a barrier to overcome.<sup>220</sup>

10. Missionary zeal is certainly characteristic of fundamentalist movements, at least in their early years, and Gush Emunim is certainly no exception to this. Israeli political movements of all ideological stripes are notable for their energy, and this was especially so for the young adherents of what would become Gush Emunim, fresh from the experience of 1967 which was for them far more than a great military victory. It was in fact, a metahistorical event and the fulfillment of the younger Kook's prophesy, and the catalyst for many of the core members to undergo a deep mystico/religious experience.<sup>221</sup> This experience was not the property of the young Kookists alone. Eliezer Livni, a Mapai figure (a leftist, Kibbutz centered party) who became a founding member and ideologue of the Land of Israel Movement, recalls that for him, the turning point came when he stood in Bethlehem, in the Judean hills, and realized that this land was more a part of him than Tel Aviv:

I felt that if I had a choice of what to give up, Mount Hebron or Tel Aviv, I should give up Tel Aviv.<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>219</sup> Gershon Shafir, "Institutional and Spontaneous Settlement Drives: Did Gush Emunim Make a Difference?" in David Newman, ed., *The Impact of Gush Emunim*.

<sup>220</sup> Julien Bauer, "A New Approach to Religious-Secular Relationships?," in David Newman, ed., *The Impact of Gush Emunim*, pp. 97-98.

<sup>221</sup> Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism,"; Gideon Aran, "A Mystic-Messianic Interpretation of Modern Israeli History."

<sup>222</sup> Rael Jean Isaac, *Israel Divided*, p. 182, n. 3.

This zeal was reflected in frantic rounds of meetings with any audience who would give them a hearing; and there were no shortage of these.<sup>223</sup> So frantic were these programs and discussions, and so ad hoc and chaotic were the later meetings that would be the genesis of Gush Emunim, that there seems to have been no time, or more precisely too much excitement, to develop even a coherent program for the Movement in these early days.<sup>224</sup> The emphasis was entirely on outreach, and the sense of idealism was so great that for a brief, shining moment it seemed that the polar division of Israeli society between religious and secular Jews may at last, in these days of redemption, dissipate, as a cloud before the light of the sun. But it was not to be. Opposition to settlement proved deeply rooted among sectors of Israeli opinion, the government proved timid and unsure, and most significantly, even if many secular Jews felt the victory of 1967 to be in some way miraculous, this perception was not to be translated into a widespread religious awakening. With this realization, the Movement began to look to the established political process rather than a public outreach as the key to the future settlement of the Occupied Territories. Thus, with the Likud victory of 1977, the movement consciously decided to tone down their public activities, and put their faith in Manachem Begin's promise of greater settlement.<sup>225</sup> It was a promise which, in the wake of Camp David, they would come to repent. Even so, the moment was lost, and the Gush would never again enjoy such widespread public access and approbation.<sup>226</sup> And with the erosion of public esteem, the missionary dimension of the Movement would atrophy, with organization spokesmen increasingly turning inward, preaching to an ever narrowing circle of the already converted. For this

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<sup>223</sup> Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism."

<sup>224</sup> Ibid. Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, p. 24.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid., p. 37, Ehud Sprinzak, "Three Models of Religious Violence."

<sup>226</sup> Ibid.

reason, it is possible to find only a partial agreement between the ideal model and the reality of the Gush Emunim.

11. Fundamentalisms arise, like millenarian movements and secular insurrectionist or revolutionary organizations, in times of actual or perceived crisis.<sup>227</sup> Israel is nothing if not a nation of permanent crisis. Even in times of relative calm, a new crisis appears as if by popular demand.<sup>228</sup> We have seen the vital importance of the war crises of 1967 and 1973 for the development of Gush Emunim. At a deeper level however, the crisis to which Gush Emunim is most aware, and most responsive, has always been the perceived twin crises: that of secular Zionism and that of Israeli nationhood.<sup>229</sup> The former is seen very much in the Rabbi Ben-Joseph/Rabbi Ben-David motif.<sup>230</sup> But it is the latter, the fear that secular Israelis have become too comfortably middle class, too enmeshed in materialism and sensuality, that is seen as the most worrisome.<sup>231</sup> This view appeared to be

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<sup>227</sup> On millenarianism, see Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit Of The Millennium* and Micheal Barkun, *Disaster and the Millennium*. The best recent work dealing with the effects of crisis on revolutionary movements is Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970). For the best overall analysis of the phenomenon of revolution, see Ekhart Zimmerman, *Political Violence, Crises And Revolutions*.

<sup>228</sup> A good example is the perennial Who's a Jew amendment, by which the religious parties in the Knesset seek to define which convert is or is not eligible for inclusion under the terms of the Law of Return for Israeli citizenship. In quiet times, such an 'affair' is guaranteed to threaten the survival of the government, as well as to make a media star out of an unwary immigrant. Shoshana Miller was the latest to undergo this rite of passage into Israeli society. See for example "The Knesset's good day (Who's a Jew?)," *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 25 June 1988, Editorial Page.

<sup>229</sup> Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism,"; Idem, "A Mystic-Messianic Interpretation of Modern Israeli History," pp. 265-266, 271-272; Uriel Tal, "The Symbolic and the Sacred," pp. 38-39.

<sup>230</sup> Rabbi Moshe Levinger, "From Messiah-Son-of-Joseph to Messiah-Son-of David."

<sup>231</sup> A. Rubinstein, *From Herzl to Gush Emunim and Back* (New York: Schocken, 1984); Norman L. Zucker, *The Coming Crisis in Israel: Private Faith and Public Policy* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1973); and Rael Jean Isaac, *Israel Divided*, are good sources for various aspects of this problem.

confirmed in the failure of large numbers of Israelis to abandon the cities and, in imitation of those earlier pioneers, the New Yishuv of the 1930s and 1940s, to take up the spartan life of the pioneer, reclaiming the biblical patrimony while advancing the process of universal redemption.<sup>232</sup> This perception caused many of the settlers the greatest anxiety in the early stages of the intifada.<sup>233</sup>

There was an initial period of shock with the opening of the intifada on the part of both the government and the settlers, characterized on the settler's part by anguished articles in the pages of the settler journal *Nekuda*, bitter denunciations of the government and the army who were seen as helpless before the Arab rioters,<sup>234</sup> and by an upsurge in unrestrained vigilante violence.<sup>235</sup> Later however, with the army taking ever more violent action against the Arab residents of the West Bank, the major personalities of Gush Emunim seemed to come to a consensus on an interpretation of the crisis. Hanan Porat, once again, put it well:

I confess that until recently I spoke out for more yelling, but I have come to realize that shouts return an echo of despair and not of

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<sup>232</sup> Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism."

<sup>233</sup> See for example, Ehud Dor, "Hanan Porat Returns to Politics," p. 20. In Porat's words:

The main problem for our people is that they feel that the whole nation is not with them heart and soul...This breaks our hearts. This is the most serious problem.

<sup>234</sup> A number of media sources are available on this. "Israeli Army Also Worried By the Settlers," *The New York Times*, 6 February 1988, p. 1; "West Bank Settlers Anger Turns Violent," *The New York Times*, 3 June 1989, p. 3; "Hiking Rage Inflames the West Bank," *The New York Times*, 4 July 1989, p. 3; "Between A Rock And A Hard Place," *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 15 July 1989, etc. Academics, particularly Israeli academics, have been slow to come to grips with the many implications of the intifada. See for good examples, Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism," and Ehud Sprinzak, "Three Models of Religious Violence."

<sup>235</sup> David Weisburd, *Jewish Settler Violence*.

empathy...The settlers prefer to view the present difficulties as the birth pangs for Messiah.<sup>236</sup>

For Gush Emunim, as for Israeli society at large, crises and impending disasters are never in short supply. For the Gush however, the greater the magnitude of the crisis, the more threatening the situation, the clearer may be heard the footsteps of redemption.

12. Fundamentalists seek to replace existing socio-political systems with a comprehensive system which they see as in some way divinely ordained or as having been in place and functioning during a perceived 'better time' or 'golden age'. For Gush Emunim however, there exists only on the fringes of the movement adherents who could be thought of as the equivalent of Islamist forces who see in the institution of *shari'a* [Islamic law] or the Christian Reconstructionist who sees the institution of Mosaic law as the key to the institution of a utopian Godly society of the just. That fringe comprises a handful of individuals whose interests are so diverse that they would have insurmountable difficulty in finding common ground. Examples abound.

The linchpin of any effort aimed at instituting a comprehensive, halachic, system in Israel is the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. For most Israelis, the first thought to come to mind in this regard would be the plot to blow up Jerusalem's Temple Mount as a first step in the rebuilding of the Third Temple and thus a 'shortcut' to redemption. In essence this

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<sup>236</sup> Haggai Segal, "The Intifada and the Many Voices of the Gush Emunim Movement," *Jewish Action* 3 (Summer 1989), p. 32. It must be emphasized here that while this was the consensus position of core members of Gush Emunim, there remained a faction under rabbi Moshe Levinger, supported by substantial numbers of non-Kookist settlement leaders and officers in the various settlement organizations, peripheral members of the Gush, and bolstered by both rank and file settlers and Kach Party members in the Occupied Territories calling for overwhelming force to be brought to bear against the Arab population, possibly followed by mass transfer if the local residents should refuse to be reconciled to the Jewish presence. These issues are discussed with great frankness by rabbi Yoel Bin-Nun, with Hanan Porat perhaps the outstanding remaining true believer in the universalist prescriptions of the elder rabbi Kook and carrier of the original idealism of Gush Emunim. "Split in The Bloc (Gush Emanin)," *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 23 May 1987, p. 7.

was the work of two men, Yehuda Etzion and Yeshua Ben-Shushan, who with an acolyte, Manachem Livni, were loosely supported by a cadre of half a dozen rather lukewarm enthusiasts.<sup>237</sup> The Temple Mount operation is a good example of the kind of specialization which serves to preclude close cooperation between adherents of this kind of deep institutional change.

More influential supporters of reclaiming the Temple Mount are an organization known as the Temple Mount Faithful whose chief activity is to appear at the base of the Wailing Wall during Jewish holidays, after having notified police well in advance of their intentions, and loudly demanding to be allowed to pray on the Mount in defiance of the 1967 Status Quo agreement reached by the Israeli authorities and the Islamic Waqf officials. The Faithful, established in 1971 now numbers about 150, with substantial support from such secularists as Irgun and Lehi veterans, a few followers of Meir Kahane, Knesset Members such as Tehiya's Guela Cohen, and Gush Emunim personalities.<sup>238</sup> A lesser known, more narrowly based group with the same interest is the *El Har Adonoi* Society, founded in 1971 and centered on students of Mercaz Herav,<sup>239</sup> thus giving it a substantial base in Gush Emunim.

The most recent media event by the TMF was the laying of a "cornerstone" for the Third Temple some 2 kilometers from the Mount, as police and city officials denied permission to Gershon Solomon, leader of the Faithful, and his "Temple Priest" Yehuda Cohen (suitably garbed for the occasion in first century [A.D.] robes and Banlon sunglasses), to approach any nearer to the site.<sup>240</sup>

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<sup>237</sup> Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, and Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism."

<sup>238</sup> Eti Ronel, "The Battle Over Temple Mount," *New Outlook* (February 1984), p. 12

<sup>239</sup> Ibid.

<sup>240</sup> "Group lays cornerstone for the 'Third Temple'," *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 28 October 1989, p. 7.

Behind the headlines of these high profile media events, there is a handful of intellectuals and craftsmen, some working out of the Temple Institute in Jerusalem, some from the confines of Jerusalem yeshivas, and others completely independently, who are laboring more systematically on various aspects of elements of the Second Temple tradition so as to reconstruct a comprehensive system which, they pray, will be ready to put in place should the Temple Mount somehow revert to Jewish control. Some study Jewish law, the Halacha, while the Temple Mount Institute concerns itself with this study as it regards the correct temple sacrifices.<sup>241</sup> Others prepare the proper priestly raiment, cautious to use no needles in their work,<sup>242</sup> while certain yeshivas prepare students who are born Cohens (hereditary priests), for Temple service. One such apprentice priest reveals much about the influence of the elder Kook on the Temple movement, and of the current view of the terrestrial nature of the time of redemption in which the Temple will be rebuilt and functioning. It is through such insights that it is possible for the uninitiated to comprehend the seeming indifference of the movement's adherents to contemporary political constraints on Jewish control of the Temple Mount.

I couldn't see myself offering sacrifices, until one day I came across a letter by R. Kook which says that if we examine the subject of sacrifice only from its external side, it seems very crude. However, the building of the Temple and the offering of sacrifices will be reinstituted only after the appearance of the holy spirit and the renewal of prophecy--that is, in a completely different atmosphere of deeper inward and theoretical contemplation. And thus, little by little, I became accustomed to the idea of the reinstitution of sacrifices in the Third Temple.<sup>243</sup>

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<sup>241</sup> Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism,"; Eti Ronel. "The Battle Over Temple Mount," p. 13.

<sup>242</sup> Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism."

<sup>243</sup> Eti Ronel. "The Battle Over Temple Mount," pp. 13-14.



It is a major effort, despite the relatively small number of those involved and the formidably halachic and political obstacles put in its path. While the political problem, centered on the veneration of the site by some 1 billion Muslims around the world, is obvious to outsiders, of greater import to the adherents themselves are the problems of Halacha. Temporal politics after all, are but transitory in the Age of Redemption.

There remains however, the rabbinic prohibition against any Jew setting foot on the Mount, lest he accidentally tread on the site of the arc, the Holy of Holies, and so incur the divine punishment of death.<sup>244</sup> To avoid this dreadful fate, scholars seek to reconstruct the plan of the Second Temple, so that the Holy of Holies will not be defiled.<sup>245</sup> Of far greater importance however, is the effort being made to reconsecrate the Temple grounds. To do so, it is required to obtain a red heifer, one of such purity that it would be red from its nose to its tail, with not a single blemish or stain of a hair of any other color, whose sacrificial ashes will be used to purify the Temple. Only nine such animals have existed in the history of the world, and only the tenth such may be used. A seemingly impossible requirement to fulfill. Except to Rabbi Yisrael Ariel, head of the Temple Mount Institute. With Ariel the innovatory nature of modern fundamentalism can be seen in its purest form. Rather than wait for God, in His good time, to provide such a beast, the G & G ranch in the Carmel mountains, in close cooperation with a laboratory in an unnamed Scandinavian country, is utilizing the latest in gene splicing technology to engineer genetically the fabled red heifer!<sup>246</sup> And in a break with tradition, the Chief Sephardi Rabbi Mordachai Eliahu came to the ranch personally to observe the endeavor's progress.<sup>247</sup>

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<sup>244</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>245</sup> Moshe Kohn, "Speedily, in our time?" *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 30 December 1989, pp. 9-11.

<sup>246</sup> Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism," and "In search of the red heifer," *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 30 December 1989, p. 11.

<sup>247</sup> "In search of the red heifer," p. 11.

Thus, while there is clear and widespread support for activities aimed at preparing the way for the Third Temple among Gush Emunim members,<sup>248</sup> there is virtually no support for taking overt actions towards bringing the Temple into existence. The evidence for this is clear and compelling. The plan to blow up the Temple Mount under the command of Yehuda Etzion was, despite meticulous planning and over one year of reconnaissance operations, ultimately not carried out because of the refusal of any rabbi of sufficient standing to sanction such an act.<sup>249</sup> Rabbi Zvi Tau of Mercaz Herav summed up the doctrine of Gush Emunim in regard to even setting foot on the Temple Mount:

...The ascent of individuals to the Temple Mount will not bring the nation any closer to it. The entire nation must be educated to stand in awe of the Temple. All this belongs to a gradual process of building up the people of Israel and its national spirit...We must first understand the essence and the greatness of the Temple Mount...(Meanwhile) we are not fit for (going up to the Mount). This is why almighty God turned it over to the Arabs, to prevent our access to it. We must labor to bring about the repentance of the entire generation. At that point Temple Mount concerns will automatically take care of themselves.<sup>250</sup>

It is the acceptance of such ancient prohibitions, side by side with the very modern, systematic and scientific preparations for the reinstitution of the Temple, which

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<sup>248</sup> in this, they stand in stark opposition to the Heredim, who consider any action whatever to 'force the end' as dangerous and counterproductive. For them, Halacha is a seamless 'garment' of 613 commandments, the meaning of many of which are lost to the present day, but when the time of redemption comes, in God's own good time, all will become clear. The Temple will come into being of itself, falling from the very sky in one conception, and to violate even one of the commandments is to delay the redemption. And what greater commandment in all of Halacha is there than the prohibition of setting foot on the Temple Mount? See Samuel C. Heilman & Menachem Friedman. "Religious Fundamentalism and Religious Jews: The Case of the Heredim." For the origins of the heaven sent Temple, falling from the sky, see Ephraim E. Urbach. *The Sages*, pp. 666-667.

<sup>249</sup> Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, pp. 62-64. Zvi Yehuda Kook, the preeminent authority who was sought out, affected not to comprehend what Etzion was talking about. Rabbi Moshe Zvi Segal refused. Even R. Levinger, never one to shy from extreme acts, would have nothing to do with Etzion's dream.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid., p. 64.

best demonstrates Gush Emunim as having one foot solidly planted in the fundamentalist camp and the other in that of messianic Judaism.<sup>251</sup> In this key contest for the heart of the Movement, between those who would follow the fundamentalist call to take redemption into their own hands, to rebuild the Temple and to force the messiah to come forth,<sup>252</sup> and those who council caution, respect for the messianic traditions of Judaism, and who would wrest redemption slowly, through the gradual reacquisition of the Patrimony, it is the latter who remain dominant. As long as this remains the case, Gush Emunim cannot in truth be grouped with those seeking a fundamental restructuring of society along scriptural/legal lines.

13. In developing this comprehensive system, fundamentalists have proved themselves to be selectively traditional and selectively modern. That Gush Emunim fits well into this category hardly needs a great deal more evidence than has been provided thus far in this chapter. The red heifer would appear to be the ultimate metaphor for such a selective approach. The careful selection and combining of the traditional and the modern which may be seen in the Movement's imperative to achieve redemption through the reacquisition of the Full Land of Israel is worthy of a thesis in itself. But perhaps the most convenient analytical approach to take to this issue is through a brief look at the *hesder* yeshiva system

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<sup>251</sup> On analytical difficulties in regard to the Temple reconstitution, see Jacob Neusner, *Messiah in Context*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), pp. 55-60. For a wonderful sampling of beliefs regarding the reconstruction of the Temple, Cf. Raphael Patai, *The Messiah Texts*, ch. 11.

<sup>252</sup> Gideon Aran discusses the outcome of the Temple Mount operation in apocalyptic terms, with the temporal result likely to escalate to the level of a Third World War, which in turn would be welcomed by the faithful as the Final Battle with Gog and Magog from which the faithful remnant of the Jews would emerge triumphant into a chiliastic paradise. Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism." Yehuda Etzion himself generally denies that apocalypse was his intent. In several successive, conflicting statements given since his arrest, he claims that his primary aim in this act was to provide an educational opportunity, or more grandiosely, a grand religious awakening, to the Jewish people, the eschatological results of which he could not dare to contemplate. Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, p. 130, 292-293, 315-318.

The hesder yeshiva system is perhaps the first triumph of the core members of Gush Emunim. Then (the 1950s) only teenaged members of the B'nai Akiva Orthodox youth movement, they could see for themselves only the most limited of choices. Deeply religious, further top level yeshiva education could be had only from the Heredim. Deeply nationalistic, they desired to serve honorably in the Israeli Defense Forces, a desire at odds with the Heredim, whose yeshiva students are in most cases expected to take advantage of the waiver of service negotiated in the original Status Quo agreement with Prime Minister David Ben Gurion in the late 1940s.<sup>253</sup> Strongly cohesive, the group had banded together in the new Orthodox educational stream<sup>254</sup> as children to form a group called *Gahalet* (The Embers),<sup>255</sup> seeking a way to combine the powerful currents of nationalism and Orthodoxy in a new, high school level yeshiva setting. The answer, won through hard bargaining through B'nai Akiva, and strong pressure on the National Religious Party, was the hesder yeshiva system.<sup>256</sup>

The hesder yeshiva today provides an example *par excellence* of the selective adaptation of traditional and modern forms to produce something entirely new, although still sanctified by the perception of its traditional basis. Hesder yeshivas may be found throughout Israel, and on many of the larger settlements, and provide a preferred mode of education for the children of Gush Emunim activists. The most prestigious of these is at Or Etzion under the direction of founding Gush Emunim member, R. Haim Druckman. Here,

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<sup>253</sup> Charles S. Liebman and Eliezer Don-Yehiya, *Religion and Politics in Israel*, ch. 3. Nadav Safran, *Israel The Embattled Ally*, pp. 210-211. Dr. Joseph Burg, "The Inseparability of Religion and State," *Israeli Democracy: A Supplement to the International Edition of the Jerusalem Post*, Fall, 1989, p. 29.

<sup>254</sup> Michael Rosenak, "Jewish Fundamentalism in Israeli Education." Ehud Sprinzak, "Gush Emunim: The Tip of the Iceberg," p. 42; and Eliezer Don-Yehiya, "Messianic Theology and Radical Politics," *Morasha* 2 (Spring/Summer 1988), p. 45.

<sup>255</sup> Gideon Aran, "From Religious Zionism to Zionist Religion," p. 116.

<sup>256</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 133-135.

from 6 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. six days per week, students are given a traditional Jewish education thought to be equal to that received by the Heredim. But unlike the Heredim, students are also given a first rate officers training course conducted by Orthodox specialists on active duty with the IDF, with subjects ranging from weapons and tactics (using live ammunition) to commando and unconventional warfare instruction.<sup>257</sup> No better example of selectivity from the ancient and modern worlds could be posited.

14. Fundamentalists practice selective retrieval of hallowed doctrines, subtly changing them in the process by lifting them from their original contexts, institutionalizing, updating and embellishing them, with the practical effect of utilizing them as weapons against a world perceived as irredeemably hostile. Gush Emunim certainly is a primary practitioner of such selective retrievals. Indeed, their most fundamental doctrinal treasure, the Kookist view of redemption, may itself be a form of selective retrieval, a minor strand of a rich heritage of messianic beliefs and traditions which seeks to depersonalize the messianic promise of Judaism, replacing it instead with impersonal forces and processes. For our purposes however, it will be sufficient to examine the major halachic controversy which divides Gush Emunim from the Heredim on the one side, and the large body of Orthodox Zionist opinion who oppose the Movement's settlement activities. That is, the relative importance of two widely recognized halachic imperatives: the sanctity of the Land vs. the sanctity of life.

The halachic issues involved in this controversy are extraordinarily complex, and until the rise of the Zionist movement in the late 19th century, so purely theoretical as to be the exclusive province of a small number of senior rabbinical scholars and yeshiva students scattered throughout the diaspora. Without attempting to reconstruct this debate here, it can

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<sup>257</sup> "Officers and Scholars," *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 25 August 1990, p. 13.

be safely posited that the majoritarian view held two basic imperatives: that the sanctity of life was such that nearly all other values were subordinated to this command, and that in any case, lacking clear signs of immanent redemption, Jerusalem was not to come again under Jewish control. This was based on the Orthodox injunction that until the time of redemption, the Jews were to refrain from rebellion against the Gentile nations or retake the Land of Israel by force.<sup>258</sup> It is in the violation of such prohibitions that the roots of Heredi rejection of the state of Israel can be found.<sup>259</sup> For religious Zionists however, the issues involved are more complex. The majoritarian position outlined above is unacceptable, entailing as it does a negation of Israeli statehood, or indeed, the very legitimacy of the Jewish presence in the Holy Land. They, in essence, hold on the basis of the written and oral Torahs, the teachings of the sages, and the realities of contemporary history, that Jewish statehood, even in lieu of the coming of messianic redemption, is indeed valid, but must be carefully balanced against the demands of Jewish ethics, and respect for the rights of others. After all:

You will not oppress the alien, you know how an alien feels, for you yourselves were once aliens in Egypt. (Exodus 23:9).

Based on such textual and midrashic formulae, the Orthodox Zionist position today centers around the halachic formulations of the 'Land for Peace' argument, with the

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<sup>258</sup> Richard I. Cohen, *Vision and Conflict in the Holy Land*, p. 142 puts the argument succinctly. Cf. Aharon Agus, *The Binding of Isaac and Messiah* (Albany, N.Y.: SUNY Press, 1988). An excellent, if difficult source for the history of the halachic developments in this context is Ephraim E. Urbach, *The Sages*, esp. ch. 17. On the 19th and 20th century developments, see Chaim I. Waxman, "The Epithet of Messianism," *Morasha* 2 (Spring/Summer 1988). Relevant documentation, and helpful explanations, are offered in Jacob Neusner, *Messiah in Context*.

<sup>259</sup> Samuel C. Heilman & Menachem Friedman, "Religious Fundamentalism and Religious Jews: The Case of the Heredim."

preservation of life the preeminent value. A good formulation of this argument is offered by Rabbi J. David Bleich:

...it is halachically legitimate to barter 'land for peace' if doing so will preserve the lives of the inhabitants of Eretz Yisrael. That, in turn, is based at least in part upon the premise that there is no obligation to engage in a war of conquest for the establishment of the Jewish homeland within the geographic confines of the Promised Land...I believe this view is shared by the majority of halachic decisors.<sup>260</sup>

Needless to say, this is not a view shared by Gush Emunim. For the core Kookist members of the Movement, trained rabbis all, the sort of halachic reasoning outlined above is impossible, for in the organization's view, the primary focus is on the biblical texts holding the sanctity of the Land as preeminent, and on the strand of Jewish messianism which these texts underlay. It is indeed a selective retrieval in its purist form, and it is made possible, as we have seen, by the Kookist view of redemptive time, whereby the biblical era and the present era are in substance simultaneous.

The biblical texts upon which the Gush places its faith are indeed clear. Genesis 34, offered in the introduction to this chapter, demonstrates the conflict between the strands of Israeli opinion, and with God's approval, how this internal conflict will be resolved to the cost of neighboring peoples. Deuteronomy 7 presents the Movement with a viable model of merciless conquest, forbidding any treaty, 'Land for Peace' or otherwise, and confirming the Jewish people as the 'Chosen':

When Yahweh your God has brought you into the country which you are going to make your own, many nations will fall before you: Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, seven nations greater and stronger than yourselves. Yahweh your God will put them at your mercy and you will conquer them. You must put them under the curse of destruction. You must not make any treaty with them and show them pity.

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<sup>260</sup> Rabbi J. David Bleich, "Of Land, Peace, and the Divine Command," p. 101.

You must not intermarry with them; you must not give a daughter of yours to a son of theirs, or a daughter of theirs to a son of yours, for your son would be seduced from following Me into serving other gods; the wrath of Yahweh would blaze out against you and He would instantly destroy you.

Instead, treat them like this: tear down their alters, smash their standing stones, cut down their sacred poles and burn their idols.

For you are a people consecrated to Yahweh your God; of all the peoples on earth, you have been chosen by Yahweh your God to be his own people.

(Deuteronomy 7:1-6)

Exodus 23 softens this somewhat, by admonishing the conquerors to recall their own treatment as a conquered people in Egypt, and to refrain from so oppressing others (Exodus 23:9). This is a primary basis for the original GE refusal to consider transfer as an option for the Arab population. Nonetheless, the same passage urges the gradual removal of the native population, while with Genesis 15 and Joshua 1, providing a definition of the boundaries held by the Movement to be the necessary prerequisite for the full redemption of the Jewish people:

'I shall send terror of myself ahead of you; I shall throw all the peoples you encounter into confusion, and all your enemies take to their heels.

I shall send hornets ahead of you to drive Hivite, Canaanite and Hittite out before you.

I shall not drive them out ahead of you in a single year, or the land might become a desert where wild animals would multiply to your cost.

I shall drive them out little by little before you, until your numbers grow sufficient for you to take possession of the land.

And your frontiers I shall fix from the Sea of Reeds of the Philistines, and from the desert to the river,\* for I shall put the inhabitants of the territory at your mercy, and you shall drive them out before you.

You will make no pact with them or with their gods.

They may not stay in your country or they might make you sin against me, for you would serve their gods, and that would be a snare for you!

(Exodus 23:27-33)<sup>261</sup>

Numbers 33 may be the key text for an understanding of the actions of Gush Emunim in the Occupied Territories, for while again setting out the imperative to take sole

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<sup>261</sup> I.e. the Gulf of Aqaba--the Mediterranean--Sinai--the Euphrates: the ideal empire of David and Solomon.



possession of the Land, there is an explicit warning from God, that if left in place, the local inhabitants will not cease to vex the Children of Israel, and more, to show compassion to these populations on questions of Land will bring down divine retribution, and ultimate dispossession.<sup>262</sup> In focusing on these texts to the exclusion of some two millennia of Exilic exegesis, and in selecting a single, messianic strand of thought to the exclusion of the majoritarian positions of rabbinic Judaism, Gush Emunim would appear to embody the process of selective retrieval as a primary indication of modern day fundamentalism. Michael Rosenak, describing the delicate fundamentalist/messianist balance of the movement, has written in this regard:

This approach subordinated Halacha to messianism. And sidestepped thereby a sincere confrontation with the problematics of contemporary oral tradition. By concentrating on messianic dialectics it has brought about two opposing tendencies; on the one hand it entrenched a traditionalism that has avoided all dialogue with the modern world and at the same time enhanced the status of a dogmatic secularism which refuses to take Jewish tradition seriously.<sup>263</sup>

15. In this process of interpreting the tradition, and in the selective retrieval of useful elements from it, charismatic, authoritarian male leaders play a central role. In the extensive literature that has grown up around Gush Emunim, there has been considerable attention given to the role, and authority, of such charismatic figures as rabbis Levinger, Porat, Eliezer Waldman, Yoel Bin-Nun and Haim Druckman. While none is charged with providing binding interpretations for the group as a whole in the sense that, for example, an

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<sup>262</sup> Citations for Gush Emunim's use of these texts are too voluminous to mention. They are used in most Movement communications, and often serve as a kind of 'portion of the week' in religious services. Micheal Zimmerman, "The Biblical Roots of Elon Moreh," gives a good example of how these passages are marshalled in support of a particular issue. For broader overviews, see Ehud Sprinzak, "Three Models of Religious Violence," and Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism."

<sup>263</sup> Quoted in Janet O'Dea, "Religious Zionism Today," *Religious Zionism: Challenge and Choices* 1, (Jerusalem: Oz VeShalom Publications, n.d.), p. 29.

Imam Khomeini, utilizing the Shi'i tradition of the *marja al-taqlid* could provide such binding interpretations for those who voluntarily choose to accept his authority,<sup>264</sup> these rabbis wield great influence. Yet it is an influence which all but R. Levinger have been loath to exercise.

In essence, the organizational strictures of Gush Emunim are such that the core disciples of the younger R. Kook, following the early excitement of settling the newly occupied territories, simply drifted apart, leaving the settlement movement to the increasingly bureaucratic control of Amana (the semi-official settlement organization). Hanan Porat for example, entered parliamentary politics, moving from Tehiya to the NRP, before quitting politics in disgust and becoming a teacher and lecturer.<sup>265</sup> Haim Drukman, the oldest of the core members of Gush Emunim, from 1977-1984 returned to the National Religious Party, splitting with them only after the Camp David accords, which he broke party discipline to vote against.<sup>266</sup> After forming a new religious Zionist Party, Matsad, which on the strength of the voting in the West Bank settlements won two seats in 1984,<sup>267</sup> he returned to the yeshiva world, heading the Or Etzion hesder yeshiva.<sup>268</sup> Rabbi Eleazer Waldman, who at only 31 was head of Kiryat Arba's Hesder Yeshiva, remained very much a part of the organization, and like R. Levinger from whose shadow he has yet to fully emerge, would exercise influence, but would never achieve real

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<sup>264</sup> Moojan Momen, *An Introduction To Shi'i Islam* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985); S. H. M. Jafri, *The Origins and Early Development of Shi'a Islam* (Beirut: Librairie du Liban, 1979).

<sup>265</sup> Ehud Dor. "Hanan Porat Returns to Politics."

<sup>266</sup> David Newman, "Gush Emunim Between Fundamentalism and Pragmatism," *The Jerusalem Quarterly* 39 (1986), p. 38.

<sup>267</sup> Ibid.

<sup>268</sup> "Officers and Scholars," p. 13.

authority.<sup>269</sup> Yoel Bin-Nun has in recent years distanced himself from the activities of the movement somewhat, becoming deeply involved only when he perceived that the increasing radicalism, indeed the signs of violence and instability in Levinger's personality, forced him in coalition with Hanan Porat, to step in and effectively provide an institutional check on Levinger's influence.<sup>270</sup>

This episode probably provides the key to understanding the limitations of the kind of central role posited by Marty and Appleby for charismatic leadership in the case of Gush Emunim. Simply put, beyond the general theological principles of the movement, there is such diversity of opinion among senior figures that they tend in times of stress to effectively neutralize each other. No greater proof of this could be offered than the cacophony of views and interpretations emanating from these core leaders in response to the intifada.<sup>271</sup>

16. In sustaining the fundamentalist movement, the charismatic leader is invested with the final authority to utilize the interpretation of the sacred past so as to control the movement's future, very much along the lines of the Shi'i example noted above. It is surprising how little attention the literature has given to this important aspect of the early development of Gush Emunim, but during his lifetime, Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook held as strong a sway over the core group of disciples trained at Mercaz Herav yeshiva as an Imam Khomeini or a Sheikh Fadl'Allah of Lebanon enjoyed over their own students and admirers.<sup>272</sup> The

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<sup>269</sup> "'Settle the Land and mend the nation'," p. 5, and Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, p. 238.

<sup>270</sup> "Rebels in Gush Emunim win share of leadership," *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 23 May 1987, p. 4. Cf. the interview with Yoel Bin-Nun in the same edition. "Split in the Bloc," p. 7. For an earlier example of a check being put on the authority of R. Levinger, Cf. Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, p. 136.

<sup>271</sup> Haggai Segal, "The Intifada and the Many Voices of the Gush Emunim Movement."

<sup>272</sup> A good source on the quality of the teacher/student relationship in the Shi'i madrasa setting is Roy Mottadeh, *The Mantle of the Prophet* (New York:Pantheon Books, 1985).

comparison here is apt, for the leadership style of these three very different leaders was remarkably similar. They were treated with great reverence by their students, their instructions were obeyed unquestioningly, and in those instances where for tactical reasons, or perhaps due simply to a change of heart, the leader issued an edict reversing course completely. Even as he was obeyed, his words and deeds were subjected to an exegetical process, the resulting consensus of which would then enter the folklore of the movement, proving once again that the almost superhuman (or divinely inspired) wisdom of the leader was beyond the ken of ordinary men. A prominent feature of this leadership style, indeed perhaps the key to its success, is the aloofness from day to day decision making maintained by the leader.

Until his death in 1982, only weeks after the final forced evacuation of the Sinai, R. Kook was the sole preeminent authority in Gush Emunim, although in most cases he chose to exercise this authority directly to institute an action only on those occasions where he felt some halachic principle to be at stake.<sup>273</sup> There is no question that R. Kook was a driving force behind the settlement movement in the aftermath of the Six Day War. The elderly rabbi even personally accompanied, on 5 June 1974, one of the illegal Elon More attempts at settlement near Nablus. With IDF soldiers attempting to clear the group, and Ariel Sharon frantically urging the soldiers to disobey their "immoral order," R. Zvi Yahuda,

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On the specifics of Khomeini and his own students in Najaf, Iraq, see Imam Rohollah Khomeini, *Islam And Revolution*,. On Fadl'Allah, a good source is Fuad Ajami, *The Vanished Imam*,.

<sup>273</sup> Julien Bauer, "A New Approach to Religious-Secular Relationships?," p. 103. On occasion, rabbi Kook could, when he wished, become involved in the minutea of tactics and even in trivia. For example, R. Kook sent R. Levinger a telegram at the Park Hotel in 1968 suggesting that he send a telegram to the Prime Minister reading: "Happy holidays from the settlers of Hebron." Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, p. 17. A good example of R. Kook in a micromanagement mode was his appointment of a young student at Mercaz Herav in 1976, Ya'acov Levin, to be PR spokesman for GE: "I was studying at Mercaz Herav and Reb Zvi Yehuda told me to start devoting myself to to Gush Emunim's press relations," Moshe Kohn, "The roots go back to the 'fifties," p. 5.

whom the soldiers would not touch or molest in any way, dramatically opened his great black coat and challenged:

If you wish, take a machine gun and kill me. [repeated thrice for emphasis] Just as its impossible to force me to eat pork and desecrate the Sabbath, you will not force me to move from here. You'll be remembered forever for the disgrace of it...A perpetual disgrace...A Jewish army evicting settlers from Eretz Yisrael.<sup>274</sup>

Only hours after making this brave declaration however, R. Kook resolved, without explanation, to leave, ordering his followers to leave as well. This sudden reversal was to be much debated by his students, and with this layer of exegesis, would enter movement lore as a model of the tactical flexibility necessary under certain conditions in the unfolding redemption process.<sup>275</sup>

The drive to send Gush Emunim settlers to the Sinai, first halfheartedly undertaken after the signing of the Camp David accords in 1975,<sup>276</sup> was ultimately ended short of bloodshed only by the invocation of the name of R. Kook. Grandiosely titled the Movement to stop the Withdrawal from the Sinai (MSW), core adherents of Gush Emunim began a serious movement to prevent the Egyptians from reestablishing sovereignty only in 1981, following the assassination of Anwar Sadat in Cairo and, more telling, the failure of the movement's attempt to derail the Camp David accords through parliamentary means via the Tehiya party in the elections of that year.<sup>277</sup> Here too, the movement was to be disappointed. The Sinai settlers to whom they offered their aid were, for the most part,

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<sup>274</sup> Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, p. 27.

<sup>275</sup> Ibid.

<sup>276</sup> Erik Cohen, "Introduction to 'The Price of Peace: The Removal of Israeli Settlements in Sinai'," *Journal of Applied Behavioral Sciences* (Special Issue, 1987), p. 4. Cf. Gideon Aran and Micheal Feige, "The Price of Peace," p. 76.

<sup>277</sup> Ibid., p. 76.

secular kibbutzniks whose primary concerns, far from the redemption of Eretz Yisrael, was to preserve a thriving export trade.<sup>278</sup> Worse, their resolve to resist government demands to evacuate the Sinai settlements dissipated miraculously in the face of monetary blandishments offered by the Israeli government that most Israeli observers at the time felt to were little short of larcenous.<sup>279</sup> Suddenly isolated from the departing established Sinai settlers, and rejected by Israeli public opinion which lumped them together with the these settlers as mercenary opportunists,<sup>280</sup> the most extreme of the MSW group, led by R. Levinger, resolved to either individually commit suicide, or to force the IDF to kill them.<sup>281</sup> Levinger was eventually overruled by a council of movement rabbis,<sup>282</sup> and as house to house fighting between the MSW and the army began to intensify, a frantic call was made to Mercaz Herav. Rabbi Kook was asleep, but in his name, and apparently without his authority, R. Tzvi Tau ordered the settlers to avoid bloodshed, their own or others, at all costs, and depart immediately.<sup>283</sup> The order, which the settlers believed to be from R. Kook himself, was obeyed immediately and unquestioningly.<sup>284</sup>

Within weeks, the elderly R. Zvi Yehuda Kook was dead. With him passed the only unquestioned source of authority in the interpretation of the tradition which would be

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<sup>278</sup> Ibid., pp. 81-82; Erik Cohen, "Introduction to 'The Price of Peace,'" p. 3.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid., pp. 8-9.

<sup>280</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>281</sup> Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, p. 151. This source agrees with Gideon Aran and Micheal Feige in describing a hardcore group of Kach Party members who apparently were more serious in their resolve to follow this 'Massada scenario,' forcing the Israeli government to fly R. Meir Kahane to the scene to dissuade them.

<sup>282</sup> Ibid.

<sup>283</sup> Ibid., p. 41.

<sup>284</sup> Ibid.

held as binding by all members of the movement. And almost immediately, as with Imam Khomeini, began a struggle for his legacy, a process in which:

They interpreted his statements to suit their needs, seeking precedents for an unprecedented situation.<sup>285</sup>

17. On both a strategic and tactical level, fundamentalists demonstrate a closer affinity to modernism than to traditionalism. This description may well have been written to describe Gush Emunim exclusively. Examples of this often unrequited love for the modern world are legion. Whether through the creation of the hesder yeshiva system, the attempt at mixed Orthodox/secular settlements, through the use of modern media outreach and international fundraising techniques and technology, or through the unbridgeable gulf which separates the movement from the Heredi world, the core members of Gush Emunim have demonstrated a far closer affinity for the modern world of nationalist Zionism than to the traditional world of yeshiva study. And this is the tragedy of the Gush Emunim, for they have proved unable to adapt to the secular and materialist world of modern Israel which they so much admire. At the same time, they have failed to gain acceptance based on their Torah scholarship from the Heredi world, whose claim to legitimacy grounded in Jewish tradition they so much covet.<sup>286</sup>

This tragedy may most clearly be seen in the Movement's doomed efforts to create an alternative modernity, fashioned in their own image. It is this quest which gives so peculiar a flavor to life in such Gush strongholds as Kiryat Arba and Ofra which are quipped with modern, export oriented industries which are hopelessly unable to meet even rudimentary levels of economic viability without government subsidies, and with large

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<sup>285</sup> Ibid., p. 151.

<sup>286</sup> For the best formulation of this dilemma, see Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism."

percentages of settlers effectively on the government payroll as civil servants or commuting to work in Israeli cities,<sup>287</sup> returning in the evening to the holistic environment of Torah study and security duties at the settlements, Gush Emunim adherents are at once in Israeli society, and yet not of it. This painful sense of isolation has been increased by the intifada, as friends and relatives from inside the Green Line have all but ceased to visit, fearing for their safety on the roads of 'Eretz Yisrael'. In another cruel irony, even these 'parallel modernities' are being increasingly wrested from the core members as the original charisma of the movement gives way to a processes of bureaucratization, and the leadership of the settlements is taken over by non-Kookist, largely non-ideological settlers who were drawn to the West Bank for reasons other than the redemption of the Land and people of Eretz Yisrael.<sup>288</sup> Thus, with a foot in each world, that of the traditional yeshiva whose respect they are denied, and their unrequited embrace of the modern world of Israeli Zionism which regards them as eccentric, if not threatening, the core adherents of Gush Emunim have found a home in neither world.

18. Fundamentalists, while both coveting and hating the trappings of modernity, are able to cleverly exploit it's processes and instrumentalities. The core cadres of Gush Emunim, in creating their alternative forms of modernity on the West Bank, have in fact demonstrated a lamentable inability to exploit, or even fully comprehend, the implications

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<sup>287</sup> These findings are widespread among researchers across the political spectrum. See for example, Meron Benvenisti, *1986 Report*; Meron Benvenisti and Shlomo Khayat, *The West Bank and Gaza Atlas*; David Weisburd and Elin Waring, "Settlement Motivations in the Gush Emunim Movement: Comparing Bonds of Altruism and Self Interest," in David Newman, ed., *The Impact of Gush Emunim*; David Weisburd, *Jewish Settler Violence*; and Chaim Waxman, "Political and Social Attitudes of Americans Among the Settlers in the Territories," in David Newman, ed., *The Impact of Gush Emunim*. For more popular treatments of the same phenomenon, see Amos Oz, *in the Land of Israel* (New York: Vintage Books, 1983) and Geoffrey Aronson, *Creating Facts*.

<sup>288</sup> David Weisburd and Elin Waring, "Settlement Motivations in the Gush Emunim Movement," and David Weisburd, *Jewish Settler Violence*.



of the institutions they created in conscious imitation of secular Israeli society. Several primary examples can be posited in this regard.

From its earliest days, the 'settlement' of the Park Hotel in Hebron and the reclaiming of the pre-1948 Israeli settlement at Kfar Etzion, the core activists who would after 1973 coalesce into Gush Emunim had two models of organization from which to choose. The first, that of the yeshiva world as exemplified by Mercaz Herav, offered the vision of a dedicated community of scholars, working under the loose direction of a single, elderly rabbi with power apportioned among the community according to scholarly attainment, seems to have not even been considered. The second, that of the sort of secular democracy practiced in Israel, appears to have been the only possible outcome of the radical egalitarianism of those early days, with ad hoc meetings often attended by 200 uninvited people, each enjoying full freedom to express an opinion.<sup>289</sup> After the 1974 meetings at Kfar Etzion which gave Gush Emunim its name and organizational structure, this democratic ethos was left largely intact.<sup>290</sup> However, the voluntaristic ethos of the movement and the 'state-of-mind' nature of its membership requirements<sup>291</sup> effectively assured that centralization would be impossible. For this reason, when over the course of time Gush Emunim, as well as the settlement activities it spawned, were faced with the diminution of its original charismatic energy, the resulting bureaucracy was left only with the secular democracy of Israeli politics to adopt as an organizational model.

Yet as we have noted throughout this chapter, most of the core members of Gush Emunim could never fully give themselves to the life of nuts and bolts organization and

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<sup>289</sup> For a good evocation of this early ethos, see Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism."

<sup>290</sup> Moshe Kohn, "'Settle the Land and mend the nation'," p. 5. Myron J Arnoff, "Gush Emunim," p. 58.

<sup>291</sup> Moshe Kohn, "The NRP and the Gush," p. 5. Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism."

constant compromise required of a democratic politician. Instead, they would drift from Gush Emunim to parliamentary political parties, back into the yeshiva world and back to the Gush in a kind of endless migratory cycle. By 1981, the organization no longer bothered to hold even the ad hoc get togethers of better days.<sup>292</sup> This left, by 1983 or 1984, the shell of Gush Emunim in the hands of non-Kookist members, and only the most extreme of the original Mercaz Herav graduates: largely the Levinger-Waldman axis at Kiryat Arba. The result was predictable, given the open, democratic nature of the organization and the state-of-mind membership form which allowed anyone who happened to be around to vote on an issue or leader. A Secretary General, Levinger protege Daniella Wise<sup>293</sup> was installed as Secretary General<sup>294</sup> and led in the period preceding the intifada a radicalization of the movement, characterized by a drastic upsurge in vigilante violence.<sup>295</sup> This culminated on 6 June 1987 in a rampage through the Dehaishe refugee camp by some 50 settlers led by Daniella Wise and peopled in large part by Kach Party members.<sup>296</sup>

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<sup>292</sup> David Weisburd and Elin Waring, "Settlement Motivations in the Gush Emunim Movement," p. 183.

<sup>293</sup> It should be noted that the choice of a woman for the post was in itself remarkable, given the all male composition of the senior cadres of the Movement, and of course of the yeshiva world where they were trained. One could speculate that R. Levinger's choice was inspired in that it was certain to further alienate the core Kookist leaders whose influence was at least a match for his own, while at the same time precluding the new Chairman from establishing a strong institutional base in her own rite which might later be used to challenge Levinger's own position or views.

<sup>294</sup> "Rebels in Gush Emunim win share of leadership," p. 4.

<sup>295</sup> For exhaustive details on these developments, see David Weisburd, *Jewish Settler Violence*. Weisburd summarizes these findings in David Weisburd and Elin Waring, "Settlement Motivations in the Gush Emunim Movement," and David Weisburd and Vered Yinitzky, "Vigilantism as Rational Social Control: The Case of the Gush Emunim Settlers," in Myron J. Aronoff, ed., *Cross-Currents in Israeli Culture and Politics, Political Anthropology Vol 4* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1984).

<sup>296</sup> "Crackdown on vigilante action," *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 20 June 1987, p. 1. Cf. "Settlers split on Dehaishe rampage," *Ibid.*, p. 5.

It was this action which led to the temporary return of Hanan Porat and Yoel Bin-Nun whom, through democratic means, reestablished some sense of equilibrium in the movement.<sup>297</sup> It would not last long however, as the core members soon lost interest, and the Gush's vigilante and extraparliamentary side would be dominant by the early stages of the intifada. Clearly, the Kookist core have not been terribly shrewd in their exploitation of the processes and instrumentalities of modern organizational structures.

More, this process of imitation of secular democratic structures can be seen in the establishment of Amana as a settlement organization and a parliamentary structure linking the West Bank settlements, as well as in the internal election processes within individual settlements. In each case, the process of bureaucratization took a similar path, with the Kookist core members of Gush Emunim being gradually supplanted by the non-Kookist periphery.<sup>298</sup> This process has brought a marked change in the settlement movement itself, with the original redemptive thrust of settlement being gradually supplanted among settlers by a host of more instrumental motivations.<sup>299</sup> Ultimately, this change may prove to be the ultimate cost of the failure of the original members of Gush Emunim to control, or even fully comprehend, the secular organizational models which they so enthusiastically adopted.

19. While fundamentalists adopt modern organizational methods and structures, they take full advantage of the openness of secular democratic societies. More, fundamentalists have taken full advantage of the inconsistencies inherent in the development and articulation of the national identities and ideologies of emergent states. The many benefits accruing to

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<sup>297</sup> "Rebels in Gush Emunim win share of leadership," p. 4. Cf. "Split in the Bloc," p. 7.

<sup>298</sup> David Weisburd, *Jewish Settler Violence*., p. 60.

<sup>299</sup> David Weisburd and Elin Waring, "Settlement Motivations in the Gush Emunim Movement."

Gush Emunim activists by the relatively open political structures of Israel have been noted throughout this chapter. These advantages range from open access to the parliamentary political system and the news media to the structure of the security forces themselves which, by its broad base in Israeli society, assures settlers of influential pockets of support, thus allowing extraparliamentary and vigilante operations to take place relatively unchecked.<sup>300</sup> Indeed, it is the very openness of Israeli society which allowed the earliest settlement efforts access to the newly occupied lands after 1967.

More fundamentally however, Gush Emunim has utilized this relative openness to seek to address the twin crises which we noted in number 11; that of secular Zionism and that of Israeli nationhood. For the former, the paradigm of Messiah Ben Joseph and Messiah Ben David has often been invoked. Beyond this general proposition however, the core members of Gush Emunim have never reached a consensus on just what the organization could, or should, do to hurry the demise of secular Zionism. Action to 'force the end' raises both within and without the organization the dread specter of false messianism, most notably that of Sabatai Zevi, the notorious false messiah of seventeenth century; a figure to whom contemporary foes of the movement compare the Gush.<sup>301</sup> With this fear in mind, it appears that the Gush under most circumstances seeks the path of gradualism: making sure on the one hand that no territory is lost, while gaining more of the patrimony whenever possible. With this determination and patience, the messianic process will at least not suffer a setback, as in Camp David, and for the rest, the Kookist view that

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<sup>300</sup> For the best available insider view of this support within the IDF, see Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*. For a more academic view of settler-IDF cooperation, see David Weisburd, *Jewish Settler Violence*, p. 82. The IDF in addition to tacit support, supplied weapons and the government authorized, until the intifada, settlers to serve their reserve duty as local security patrols near their own settlements.

<sup>301</sup> The most recent such charge may be found in Michael Rosenak. "Jewish Fundamentalism in Israeli Education." It is however, very common in the literature.

secular Zionism will come to the full realization of its own innate sacred spark and will then give way to religious Zionism a la Gush Emunimin God's own good time.

What Gush Emunim can take full advantage of is the quaint Israeli system of democracy, and the vacuum of leadership it all but guarantees that unfortunate nation. Israelis vote by party lists, with no direct control of the relative rankings of candidates, and with the resulting lists of party hacks having no direct responsibility to any geographical district or any particular segment of the electorate beyond a narrow circle of party bosses. Today, political and demographic changes within the Israeli polity have effectively ended the dominance of a single party coalition, resulting in a series of brokered government coalitions, with fringe parties, and religious parties, holding the balance of power. Within such a milieu, characterized by an increasingly disgruntled electorate, Gush Emunim and a host of small, anti-establishment movements across the political spectrum, from Peace Now to Kach, have found fertile pockets of discontent. Ironically, in taking advantage of this discontent, movements such as the Gush have come to themselves hold a share of power, usually through parliamentary means although pressure groups capable of delivering blocs of votes or cash may also be found in this category. Invariably, this power is translated into access to government funds and, in the case of Gush Emunim, into commitments to further settlement projects as well.<sup>302</sup>

20. Following from the ability of fundamentalists to take advantage of the openness of democratic systems while simultaneously seizing on contradictions and uncertainties regarding the policies and national identities of emergent states, is the boost which fundamentalists receive from both the failed development policies of secular regimes and the unpopular or esoteric teachings of religious liberals or modernists. The position of

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<sup>302</sup> Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, "Conclusion: An Interim Report on a Hypothetical Family."

Gush Emunim in relation to this complex of factors is highly ambiguous. There are a number of reasons for this.

First, Israel, like a number of developing states, emerged only in the post-WWII world. Unlike these states however, Israel was a largely immigrant nation whose inhabitants shared little more than an adherence to Zionism in one form or another and a perception of being under siege by a hostile host population. In contrast to the neighboring Islamic states who were achieving national independence in the same period, Israelis possessed no shared frame of reference which posited any but a secular model of government. And this model of secular Zionism proved to be notably successful in the process of expansion and nation building. Today Israel holds territories once belonging to Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon. In short, the policies of the secular Zionist regime of the state of Israel could hardly be said to have failed.

Gush Emunim arose in fact, in the context of what most would consider Israel's greatest victories. Its adherents began the movement to settle the conquered lands immediately after the 1967 victory, moving into Hebron and Kfar Etzion. The Gush as an organized entity coalesced after the war of 1973. That war, after some initial setbacks, resulted in a military victory, which more importantly was followed by the Camp David treaty, the first formal recognition of Israeli legitimacy ever accorded by an Arab state.<sup>303</sup> A setback in the redemption process for Kookist adherents perhaps, but for secular Israelis the Sinai desert, with its single oil well and a few agricultural settlements, did not appear a high price to pay for peace. Thus, it appears that contrary to the Marty-Appleby model, it was the triumphs, not the failures of secularity which most energized Gush Emunim.

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<sup>303</sup> Ismael Fahmy, *Negotiating For Peace in The Middle East* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 1983), ch. 2; Mohamed Heikel, *The Road to Ramadan* (New York, Random House, 1975); and Idem., *Autumn of Fury* (New York, Random House, 1983), pp. 50-51.

The second part of the model, that of the unpopular or esoteric nature of the teachings of religious liberals or modernists, has as well had little effect on Gush Emunim. Several reasons inherent to Judaism may be posited for this. Obviously, one is the secularity of Israeli society itself. The major arena of internal religious tension therefore, is not between liberal and fundamentalist or modernist and traditionalist streams of religiosity as in the Islamic world. Rather, it is between institutional religion itself, as personified by the Chief Rabbinate, and the secularity of Israeli society as a whole.<sup>304</sup>

Underlying the headlines generated by the numerous skirmishes in this running battle however,<sup>305</sup> there is a deeper, more impassioned struggle between a Judaism seen as formalistic, relativist, and the ultimate epithet, 'Helenized',<sup>306</sup> and a Judaism posited as authentic, Semitic, and the personification of the 'New Jew'; a proud Zionist uninterested in the opinions of outsiders and bitterly scornful of the cowardice of the Chief Rabbinate. Far from the Kookist view of inherent Holiness in the most secular of Jews, this strain of Judaism sees secular Jews as little better than the gentiles with whom, when the day comes that power accrues to this group, they would do well to rejoin in exile (*galut*). This view

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<sup>304</sup> Norman L. Zucker, *The Coming Crisis in Israel: Private Faith and Public Policy* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1973), is a good early source on these problems. Charles S. Liebman and Eliezer Don-Yehiya, *Civil Religion in Israel* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983) furthers this analysis.

<sup>305</sup> Any examination of the Israeli press in any given year would provide chapter and verse on these problems. Most recently, the central battlegrounds are, as we have seen, the 'Who's a Jew' amendment and the divorce laws-- both perennials. On the latter, see for example "Rabbis air plan for divorce reforms," *The Jerusalem Post International edition*, 27 January 1990, p. 18.

<sup>306</sup> The Helenizitaion charge is in fact a code word which should be read as European, and in the Israeli context Ashkenazi. It appears to reflect on a deeper level a rejection of the process of *haskela* (enlightenment) begun by Moses Mendelssohn in the 18th century. See Robert M. Seltzer, pp. 557-579. The charge of reletivization and formalism subsumed in this epithet however, is not without substance. For a good introduction to the apologetic tone employed by some of the preeminent Jewish scholars of the day when seeking to explain doctrines of Judaism which do not accord with enlightenment rationalism, see the chapters dealing with questions of eschatology and messianism in Arthur A. Cohen and Paul Mendes-Flohr eds., *Contemporary Jewish Religious Thought* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1987).

is of course that of Meir Kahane and his Kach Party, the real beneficiary of the sort of resentments posited here.<sup>307</sup> It is the appeal of Kahanism that may explain in large measure the failure of Gush Emunim to benefit from the failures of secular Zionism or the liberalizing trends in the tradition itself, for it was Kahane who best appealed to the festering resentments of those left out of the triumphs of secular Zionism. These individuals form in fact a permanent underclass in the Israeli polity, while the adherents of Gush Emunim are virtually to a man well educated *Ashkenazim*.<sup>308</sup>

21. Fundamentalists often claim authentication of their religious and political endeavors from their services to populations marginalized or ignored by modern governments. In stark contrast to the success of such Islamic fundamentalist movements as the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood in creating an alternative network of community level social services which the Egyptian government has so starkly failed to provide, Gush Emunim has never made a concerted outreach effort to the lower echelons of the Israeli socioeconomic spectrum. This is not to say that some idealistic attempts of this nature were not attempted in the early days of the movement. Rabbi Yoel Bin-Nun describes these hopes:

A proper settlement program, properly implemented, will go a long way towards solving the country's social and economic problems,

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<sup>307</sup> Aviezer Ravitzky, *The Roots of Kahanism*. The disgust of Gush Emunim core members for Kahane is evident in, for example Hanan Porat's words:

He [Kahane] thinks that redemption can be achieved by expelling the Arabs. This makes me ashamed. Redemption is something you do for and to yourself, not to someone else,

"Waiting for the Call," *The Jerusalem Post Magazine International edition*, 13 March 1987, p. 8.

<sup>308</sup> David Weisburd, *Jewish Settler Violence*, pp. 51-53. Weisburd finds that 82% of West Bank settlers are Ashkenazi, 66% have post-high school educations and 35% have higher yeshiva training. By comparison, Weisburd notes that the demographics of Israel proper are: 40% Ashkenazi, 13% with post high school education and 3% with higher yeshiva training.



increasing *aliya* [immigration], and decreasing *yerida* [emigration]. Existing settlement policy is based on antiquated concepts and poses no challenges whatever--neither to Israelis nor to *olim* [immigrants]...

The competition between the socio-economic groups gets more and more savage, jealousy and crime increase. This can be solved only by a massive settlement program that will attract people from sectors of the population, and olim, too. This is what has happened at Kiryat Arba.<sup>309</sup>

Despite the designation of some settlements as urban settlements, roughly the West Bank equivalent of moshavim (development towns), there is a fundamental distinction between the two which well reflects mindset and social composition of Gush Emunim:

...the major difference is that...[moshavim are] in peripheral locations with weak economic and social bases, often giving rise to poverty neighborhoods and unemployment. The development of small townships within the West Bank are aimed at a middle class population living at higher standards than they were able to in the metropolitan centers.<sup>310</sup>

The Israeli underclass in the moshavim, as this quote implies, have largely not been welcomed into the settlement effort. The abundance of cheap Arab labor is one factor in this development. More telling is the need in closed environments for social compatibility. Settlement admissions committees are charged with screening out would be settlers who do not seem to fit in with the veterans of a particular settlement. The difficulties experienced by even affluent and well educated secular settlers in blending into Orthodox settlement communities point up how much wider still would be the gulf separating poorly educated, largely Sephardi settlers from an Orthodox Ashkenazi community.<sup>311</sup> Despite their

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<sup>309</sup> Moshe Kohn, "Settle the Land and mend the nation," p. 5.

<sup>310</sup> David Newman, "Spatial Structures and Ideological Change in the West Bank," in David Newman, ed., *The Impact of Gush Emunim*, pp. 177-178.

<sup>311</sup> There are some exceptions to this rule, with some highly educated and motivated Sephardim blending successfully into West Bank settlement communities. In addition, there exist some 'non-selective' settlements who do welcome most applicants. These settlements are, however, not generally identified with Gush Emunim. See Naomi Nevo, "Religiosity and Community: A Case Study of a Gush Emunim Settlement," in David Newman, ed., *The Impact of Gush Emunim*.

Kookist ideology of inherent Holiness as the primary quality distinguishing the Jewish people, Gush Emunim would appear to be an elitist movement to whom 'affirmative action' in the American sense holds little appeal. In this, despite their modern and democratic internal structures, they would appear to maintain much of their yeshiva heritage. It is the combination of middle class Ashkenazi social background and yeshiva education that inhibits the Gush from appealing to the population of the 'dispossessed' of Israeli society in the manner of many other fundamentalist movements.

22. Fundamentalists utilize the provision of social services to the deprived and dispossessed as a recruiting tool, and as a way of building sympathy for its ideals in the larger community, ultimately with the object of fighting back, in whatever way possible, against the godless and/or oppressive regimes. Once again, Gush Emunim would fit this category only in the loosest sense. The settlements, their one operative model of alternative modernity, as indicated above are hardly interested in rewarding new settlers. Indeed, the settlement movement in the years of Likud power in the late 1970s, expanded only because of the extremely generous incentives provided by the government,<sup>312</sup> creating in the process a majority of settlers who do not share the Kookist outlook of ongoing redemption with the Gush Emunim settlers.<sup>313</sup> Social outreach was not calculated by Gush Emunim to win sympathy in the wider audience of Israeli society. Rather, Gush Emunim sought first and foremost to awaken secular Israelis to the sacred spark of which they were unwitting carriers. Only then, with the Messiah Ben Joseph of secular Zionism having given way to the conquering Messiah Ben David, will the Full Land of Israel revert to its people and the redemption process brought to final fruition. This is not done by careful

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<sup>312</sup> Gershon Shafir, "Institutional and Spontaneous Settlement Drives."

<sup>313</sup> David Weisburd and Elin Waring, "Settlement Motivations in the Gush Emunim Movement."

coalition building, although some core Gush members were not averse to forming such coalitions. Nor is this done by missionary work among the oppressed, although the younger R. Kook did send some Mercaz Herav students on missions to work in the urban slums and the moshavim.<sup>314</sup> Rather, in keeping with the mysteries of the unfolding process of redemption, Gush Emunim adherents had merely to wait, hold fast to the land they had gained, and guard zealously against reversals of the redemptive drive through the alienation of this land.

It is only in this last point, preserving the land under Jewish control, that Gush Emunim could potentially fit into this category of 'ideal fundamentalism'. For Gush adherents, the question of territory is the ultimate 'zero-sum' calculation. Every centimeter of the patrimony gained advances proportionately the redemption process. Every centimeter lost produces an equal and opposite reaction. There is clearly, 'a law of nature' at work here, and thus it is incumbent on each and every adherent to defend the Land with his very life. Believers in this view were caught by surprise by Camp David in 1973, although there remains considerable question as to what the precise biblical boundaries with respect to Sinai are.<sup>315</sup> There are no such questions regarding the West Bank.

For the Gush core members, the very means and instrumentalities of government in the state of Israel are holy. It is this view which so troubled Gush members during the confrontations with the IDF at Elon Moreh and Yamit. It is as well this view which made the emergence of the Jewish Underground so troubling to core Gush leaders, for with regard to the government of Israel, the Gush are innately supernomian, albeit on occasion it is necessary to 'instruct' the government on the mandates of Halacha as seen by the movement. However, there is a minimum line that, in keeping with Halacha, it is better to

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<sup>314</sup> Moshe Kohn, "The secular 'Gush' speaks its mind," *The Jerusalem Post*, 1 August 1976, p. 5; and Moshe Kohn, "The roots go back to the 'fifties," p. 5.

<sup>315</sup> Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism."

accept death than to transgress. To GE, that line is drawn at the Israeli government becoming an obstacle to the fruition of Jewish, and thus universal, redemption by either alienating from Jewish control any of the biblical patrimony, or in the same way, seeking to limit Jewish immigration to people the Land.<sup>316</sup> Only in such a circumstance could Gush Emunim lead whatever elements in the Israeli polity that they have in these years managed to win over, and seek to defend R. ben Joseph's path from the apostate Zionist state. Thus, it is only in the theoretical sense of being prepared to fight back against an apostate

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<sup>316</sup> Ehud Sprinzak, "Fundamentalism, Terrorism and Democracy: The Emergence of Gush Emunim," *New Outlook* (September/October 1988), p. 12. For a good view of the emotional commitment behind this reasoning, see Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*. David Weisbord found in his 1982 research that while only 8.3% of settlers had come into active conflict with the IDF through violent demonstrations, 28.4% had practiced passive resistance and 63.3% denied having been involved in such activities at all. In the same survey, in reply to the theoretical question of whether only passive resistance would be permissible should the government attempt to dismantle the settlements, the replies were significantly different.

Response	%
Strongly disagree	13.3
Disagree	29.5
No opinion	8.4
Agree	28.0
Strongly agree	20.8

Number of cases=488

Thus, on this theoretical basis, the settlements were almost evenly divided on anti-government violence in 1982, when the question was far more distant than today, under the impact of the intifada. See David Weisburd, *Jewish Settler Violence: Deviance and Social Reaction*, pp. 110-112. Weisburd also documents the views of settlers equating in seriousness the questions of halting settlement and halting *aliya* (immigration):

Response	%
Strongly disagree	2.0
Disagree	7.6
No opinion	3.9
Agree	27.3
Strongly agree	59.2

Number of cases=493

Thus, an overwhelming 86.5% of settlers do make this aliya-Land alienation connection. *Ibid.*, p. 109.

regime, should one take power, that Gush Emunim could be said to be a part of this category of the ideal model.

23. Fundamentalists seem to have an innate understanding of, and a seemingly effortless ability to manipulate, the modern mass media. It is an interesting facet of Gush Emunim that, despite heroic efforts to utilize the secular instrumentalities offered by Israeli democracy to project their message beyond a narrow constituency of Orthodox Zionists, their message of Kookist orthodoxy has proven too religious to connect with secular Israelis and too Zionist to impact on the Heredi world, guarded as it is by a zealous cadre of rabbis whose primary concern is to prevent at all costs the contamination of the flock by the surrounding Israeli society.<sup>317</sup>

Breaking out of this closed media circle has been no easy task. In its formative stages, the movement could rely on the assistance of the tireless, media-wise propaganda of the members of the Land of Israel Movement.<sup>318</sup> The first 'Secretariat' of the fledgling Gush even contained several secular members who were able to bridge this religious/secular divide,<sup>319</sup> in the process making Gush Emunim media heroes.<sup>320</sup>

Yet this early secular/Orthodox amity did not long endure, and with the departure of the secular supporters, core members of Gush Emunim, with their yeshiva educations and

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<sup>317</sup> On GE's adventures in medialand, see Moshe Kohn, *Who's Afraid of gush Emunim?* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Post Press, 1978), a book based on a 1976 series of *Jerusalem Post* interviews which in their original form have been heavily utilized in this chapter. Cf. Michael Rosenak. "Jewish Fundamentalism in Israeli Education," and Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism." On the Heredim, see Samuel C. Heilman & Menachem Friedman. "Religious Fundamentalism and Religious Jews," and Charles S. Liebman, "Jewish Fundamentalism and the Israeli Polity."

<sup>318</sup> Moshe Kohn, "Redemption or Disaster?" *The Jerusalem Post Magazine*, 30 July 1976, pp. 6-7; Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism."

<sup>319</sup> "The secular 'Gush' speaks its mind," p. 5.

<sup>320</sup> Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism."

boundless naïvety, were ill prepared, at key moments, to deliver well-calculated sound-bites to at once reassure the Israeli public while energizing supporters. This was most painfully obvious at the crisis at Yamit. It was not that the Gush members of the movement to Stop Withdrawal did not earnestly try to project their message, nor that the Israeli media were biased in their coverage. It was simply that the MSW were themselves of two minds on the media:

It's always a problem in any popular movement, and certainly a protest movement. On the one hand you want publicity, on the other you don't want to create scandals--its just not our way, and in any case, it's not effective from a public relations point of view...We had a real problem when we wanted to transfer the public's attention from the compensation issue to the withdrawal. It was just impossible.<sup>321</sup>

At the same time, inside the MSW, there was an inability to admit that events were staged with the media in mind, fearing that in the eyes of other movement members, this would indicate a lack of seriousness:

It's true that we always took the media into consideration. But the worst thing you could say to somebody was that he only wanted to carry out a particular action because of how it would look.<sup>322</sup>

Most serious however, was that having been given the air time to put forth the MSW's message, there was an almost complete failure to communicate in terms which would be comprehensible to the broad Israeli public. It is a problem which would plague the movement to the present day. As one veteran of Yamit explains:

We were always convinced that if we could only get our message across, people would be convinced. But we tried over and over, and it just

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<sup>321</sup> Gadi Wolsfeld. "Protest and the Removal of Yamit: Ostentatious Political Action," p. 112.

<sup>322</sup> Ibid., p. 113.

didn't work...Our major message, that it's wrong to uproot Jewish settlements, never got through. People were open to hear about how it would effect them from an economic point of view or from a security point of view, but never about the principle itself. In any case the news media never let us get through. They couldn't deal with the values and ideas. From that point of view we failed.<sup>323</sup>

*Nekuda*, the settlement magazine, was one answer to this failure. It was at least a forum more conducive than television to holding forth on an unfolding redemption process which for most Israelis proved, given the stubborn problems of everyday existence in Israel, rather too esoteric to accept. Public meetings and personal proselytization was another answer, although this had after Yamit a rather declining utility. Gush Emunim, having been seen to battle the people's army, the backbone of the nation, would never again recover its high standing.<sup>324</sup> Foreign outreach was yet another method, raising funds in the diaspora<sup>325</sup> and even allegedly entering into a series of lucrative funding operations with certain fundamentalist Christian groups who, for eschatological reasons, had an interest in seeing the Whole Land of Israel under full Jewish sovereignty.<sup>326</sup>

Obviously, none of these expedients is sufficient to spread the Movement's message beyond its own circle of sympathizers. There are however, few other options to be had in Israel. In contrast to the United States, where any local fundamentalist preacher able to raise the funds can get his message out on cable television. While Israel's *The Voice of Jerusalem* is a cable staple, and even such fringe organizations as the Ku Klux Klan in California and Minister Farakan's heterodox Nation of Islam in Chicago can get in

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<sup>323</sup> Ibid., p. 114.

<sup>324</sup> Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism."

<sup>325</sup> "The Gush: 'A tool of politicians,'" *The Jerusalem Post*, 2 August 1976, p. 5.

<sup>326</sup> This assertion is controversial, and denied far more strenuously on the Gush side than on that of the Christians. For an overview of the controversy, see Barbara & Micheal Ledeen, "The Temple Mount Plot," *New Republic* 3 (June 18, 1984).

front of the cameras on local access cable channels, broadcasting in Israel is a jealously guarded government monopoly.<sup>327</sup> Thus, it remains *Nekuda*, supplemented with the propaganda tours, which must bear the burden of carrying the Gush Emunim message. And this hardly constitutes a shrewd exploitation of the processes and instrumentalities of modernity.

### Conclusion: Gush Emunim as a Fundamentalist movement?

The history of Israel is the history of the minority, of Joshua son of Nun, and Caleb, son of Yephuna, who said, "Let us arise and take it; we shall succeed." In the end, the consensualist majority turned on its heels and died in the desert while these two did enter the Land. Eliyakim Haetzni<sup>328</sup>

Based on this survey, Gush Emunim would appear to fit, albeit uncomfortably, within the ideal model of fundamentalism tentatively offered by Marty and Appleby. Given the interim nature of the model, and the lack of weighting of the various 'family resemblances', any methodology based on this model could be labeled as at best, only tentative. Is, for example, the selective retrieval of doctrines of greater import to the modern phenomenon of fundamentalism than, say, missionary zeal? Or is mastery of the mass media a precondition for the benefit derived by fundamentalists from the failed

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<sup>327</sup> There are some leaks in this net, but none of these would be amenable to Gush Emunim exploitation. For example, Abbie Nathan's *Voice of Peace* operates as an off-shore pirate radio station, offering far more music than news, and is thus tolerated. Pat Robertson's *700 Club* broadcasts during prime time from Israeli occupied Southern Lebanon, and can be picked up in Israel and the Occupied Territories, offering such fare as old American sitcoms, 'born again' testimonies and news in Arabic, and, a personal favorite, Monday Night Football!! Jordan television and radio is clearly received throughout Israel and the West Bank, beaming news in Arabic, French and English. In a testament to Israeli bureaucracy, Jordan provides non-Hebrew speaking olim and tourists with their major source of news in English. None of these outlets however, would be viable GE options.

<sup>328</sup> Quoted in Ian Lustick, *For the Land and the Lord*, p. 126.



policies of secularist regimes? The answers to questions such as these will come, if at all, from the future course of the research of the Fundamentalism Project.

In the meantime, this chapter will tentatively hold all 23 variables of the ideal construct as of equal weight, and will subject the data on Gush Emunim to a 4-point scale, ranging from 'Strong Match' to 'Inapplicable'. The definitions of these categories are as follows:

**Strong Match.** Gush Emunim fits perfectly into this variable as it satisfies the tests of original intent and ongoing commitment. That is, the movement from its inception demonstrated an adherence to this factor, and has not subsequently abandoned its commitment.

**Partial Match.** The movement at one time demonstrated an adherence to the variable, and has either subsequently abandoned this commitment, or has consciously sought to downplay it in the public mind.

**Weak Match.** The variable is applicable to fringe adherents of the movement only, and is atypical of Gush Emunim as a whole. Examples would be variables embraced by Kahanist elements on the periphery of the organization or by adherents of the Jewish Underground, but rejected by the Kookist core members of the Gush.

**Inapplicable.** The variable has never been a part of the core or the periphery of Gush Emunim.

Variable	Strong Match	Partial Match	Weak Match	Inapplicable
Religious idealism	X			
Sacred text as basis for undifferentiated view of revealed truth		X		
Intentionally scandalous behavior	X			
Extremism as litmus test		X		
Dramatic eschatologies		X		
Eschatology matched to real life	X			
Name, dramatize and mythologize enemies				X
Contra-acculturative Orientation				X
Sets boundaries	X			
Missionary zeal		X		
Arises in times of crisis	X			
Replace existing systems			X	

with a comprehensive  
system

Selectively traditional/  
selectively modern

X

Selective retrieval

X

Selective retrieval by  
charismatic male  
leaders

X

Single leader has  
final authority

X

Closer affinity to  
modernism than  
traditionalism

X

Exploitation of processes  
of modernity

X

Advantages from secular  
democracies and the  
inconsistencies in  
national identifications  
and ideologies

X

Benefit from failed  
policies of secular  
regimes and esoteric  
or liberal religious  
teachings

X

Serves population  
of deprived

X

meets needs of  
deprived to build  
sympathy in wider  
population and to fight  
back against regimes

X

Masters of mass media

X

TOTAL

9

6

5

3

Lacking then, a system by which to rank in terms of relative importance the variables posited in the Marty-Appleby ideal model of modern fundamentalism, we are faced with the next obvious question: how closely does any current religio-political movement actually adhere to this academic model? Indeed, how many points of agreement are required before a group is declared to have met the academic test of fundamentalism? The answers to these questions are complicated by the lack of scholarly agreement on precisely what are the boundaries separating concepts which in the real world often prove to be overlapping: fundamentalism, traditionalism, messianism, millenarianism, etc.

Thus, for Gush Emunim, it has in practice proved to be somewhat difficult at certain points in this chapter to determine whether the observable phenomena could be traced to a fundamentalist impulse, or to a Jewish messianic origin. The drive by some Gush members to replace the existing political and legal order of Israel with a holistic, halachicly-based order centering around the putative Third Temple is a case in point. The paucity of recent data on the views of Gush Emunim adherents further complicates the picture, making it impossible at this time to state with absolute certainty whether in areas such as this, the messianic or fundamentalist sides of the corporate 'Gush Emunim personality' will emerge as dominant in the near future.<sup>329</sup>

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<sup>329</sup> The opinion research data presented by the literature has not sought to examine Gush adherents in isolation from other West Bank settlers. At best, it has been able to document the relative numbers of Gush adherents or sympathizers, and to demonstrate the displacement of the Kookist core members from leadership positions in the individual settlements. David Weisburd, *Jewish Settler Violence*. Cf. Lilly Weissbrod, "Core Values and Revolutionary Change," and Chaim Waxman, "Political and Social Attitudes of Americans Among the Settlers in the Territories."

Nevertheless, taking all of these analytical difficulties into account, the data does, I believe, allow for a tentative finding that Gush Emunim does meet the definition of a fundamentalist movement based on the Marty-Appleby ideal construct. With 15 of 23 variables either strongly or partially in agreement, there is clearly a powerful current of fundamentalism, in line with other cases of global fundamentalism, at the heart of the movement.

This finding is reinforced by a closer examination of the variables in the ideal model where only a weak match was found. In the drive to replace existing systems with a holistic system based on Halacha, the very fact that such an impulse could appeal to even fringe members of the movement is remarkable, given the marked lack of authoritative agreement on the very meaning of much of the Halachic code, or of the precise contours and requirements of the Second Temple, the restoration of which is the necessary precondition for the institution of Halacha in Israel. Neither Christianity or Islam have such powerful barriers to the institution of the 'Government of God'.

In the peculiar circumstances of Israel, only 42 years old and with a clear conception of the success of Zionism as a national ideology, Gush Emunim could hardly be expected to derive benefit from the failed policies of the secular regime. Rather, in as clear a statement of the ideological flexibility characteristic of fundamentalist movements, Gush Emunim is based on the proposition that having been exhausted and spiritually unfulfilled by its very success, secular Zionism will give way to religious Zionism with the Gush at the vanguard. This formulation neatly allows for the movement to effectively coopt the *success* of the secular regime.

It may be precisely this abstract and rather elitist vision which leads to the most important deviations from the ideal model. As a vanguard movement, middle class in composition and blessed with an ideology of inevitability, GE has had little incentive, or opportunity, to reach out to the lowest strata of the Israeli socio-economic spectrum. Thus unlike Islamic movements concentrating their daily outreach on the dispossessed, or those

Protestant fundamentalist ministries whose major constituency is working class, Gush Emunim core adherents simply do not speak the language of the Israeli underclass. Thus, they have been unable or unwilling to serve the population of the deprived, and have therefore proved ineffective at utilizing such an appeal to the underdog to build a wider constituency in Israeli society. And as Yamit graphically demonstrated, Gush Emunim was notably unsuccessful at getting its message out through the mass media, and largely as a result, could not mobilize a significant constituency to fight back against the regime in the moment of its greatest 'deviation': the trading of land for peace.

The peculiar circumstances of Israel do much to explain as well those variables which were found totally inapplicable to Israel. The very success of the Zionist enterprise the legacy of which Gush Emunim lays claim, has effectively inhibited the development of a manichaen mentality which finds a need to name, demonize and mythologize the enemy. This is in stark contrast to modern Islamic fundamentalism, to which the West, once personified by Great Britain, and currently by the United States, both explains the marked decline of Islamic civilization on the world stage and reenacts the primordial struggle between good and evil, light and darkness, indeed of God and the Devil, which is in the guise of the *Dar al-Harb* [House of War] and the *Dar al-Islam* [House of Islam] at the heart of the Qur'anic view of the world.<sup>330</sup> Lacking such an omnipotent foe, the need to isolate and negate, the substance of the contra-acculturative orientation variable, does not arise.

The final variable found inapplicable to Gush Emunim, the ability of many fundamentalist movements to exploit the processes of modernity, returns us to the central metaphors which opened this chapter: the struggle for the soul of the Gush between the expansive *realpolitic* of Genesis 34, and the traditional messianic yearnings of the Jewish

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<sup>330</sup> While there are numerous sources on this subject, none surpasses in quality or depth of insight that of Marshall C. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, 3 volumes.

people personified in the Messiahs Ben Joseph and Ben David, that is, between fundamentalism and messianism. Although possessed of substantial elements of both fundamentalism and messianism, while completely adhering to neither, it is the finding of this chapter, based on the Marty-Appleby typology, that the soul, and the future, of the movement lies with the dominance of modern religious fundamentalism.

## CHAPTER 6

# THE ORGANIZED "ANTI-CULT" MOVEMENT AND THE MILLENNIAL COMMUNITY

### Introduction

*Then the look-out shouted,  
'On the watchtower, Lord,  
I stay all day  
and at my post  
I stand all night. [Isaiah 21:8]*

*On your walls, Jerusalem, I have posted watchmen;  
they will never be silent, day or night. [Isaiah 62:6]*

*The rise of the militant anti-cult movement in America marks a new chapter in the history of human bigotry. The new bigotry turns both the ideology and the new scientific perspectives of the Enlightenment into the effective tools of modern scapegoating. The use of modern science and technology in the scapegoating solution was pioneered with great energy and effectiveness by the Nazis. [J. Gordon Melton and Robert L. Moore]<sup>1</sup>*

*Can't we all just get along? [Rodney King, 1992]*

Virtually without exception, every religious movement examined in the pages of this dissertation has drawn upon itself the attention of a highly motivated cadre of opponents dedicated to the task of 'exposing' the alleged failings of the movement. The jury associated with this court of public opinion may be a religious denomination, it may as easily be the general public, or it may be the agencies of a local, state or the federal government. Often, not content with merely publicizing the iniquities of the movement, these 'watchdog groups' may organize to harass, intimidate, or even outlaw the target

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<sup>1</sup> J. Gordon Melton and Robert L. Moore, *The Cult Experience: Responding to the New Religious Pluralism* (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1982), p. 95.



group. But whatever form the opposition takes, it seems to be an immutable law of nature, or perhaps a confirmation of the axiomatic truth of the Hegelian dialectic, that for every millennial or messianic group which takes wing and seeks to spread its 'good news,' there arises an equally strongly motivated group of enemies who seek to counter by any available means the millenarian or messianic message.

Each of the movements examined in these pages have had this rather unhappy experience, and it is in the complex interactions of the two groups of adherents, the thesis and the antithesis to borrow again from Hegel, that the final components of the 'community of seekers' who are at the heart of this examination becomes most clear; illuminating in the process the often remarkable degree of symbiosis which lock the seemingly irreconcilable groups into an incongruous embrace. Thus, Christian Identity has its Anti-Defamation League (ADL), its Klanwatch, and most recently, its Simon Wiesenthal Center, just as surely as its forerunner, British-Israelism<sup>2</sup> had its own opponents in the American denominations and, in Great Britain, in the Anglican Church. The B'nai Noah, interestingly enough, although as yet too new to have drawn the level of organized opposition which the other movements in this dissertation have aroused, lost no time in attracting the interest of a 'watchdog' group dedicated to monitoring and exposing each and every one of its alleged conspiratorial machinations: Christian Identity! The Ásatrú community draws attention from the same elements of the religious anti-cult movement which takes an interest in the neo-pagan and wiccan community generally, but there are signs that with the increasing identification of Odinism with the revolutionary right, particularly with elements of Christian Identity, National Socialism and the skinhead groups, the same largely Jewish opponents of the right wing, most notably the ADL, are taking an interest in the movement. Interestingly, unlike the the cases of the late Meir

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<sup>2</sup> British-Israelism is also commonly referred to as Anglo-Israelism and even Destiny of America. This dissertation will use the first two titles interchangeably.

Kahane's Kach movement or the Third Temple movement in Israel,<sup>3</sup> Gush Emunim have encountered no true anti-cult crusaders. Why this should be will be considered in this chapter as well.

At the heart of this symbiosis is the niche occupied by the anti-cult movement (ACM). Their role, paradoxically, is to bring the message of the target group to the attention of the dominant cultural community--albeit in often grotesquely distorted forms. Yet it is an invariable product of the effort to demonize the upstart millenarian or messianic movement that the target group is exposed to the mass media, and via the media to other concerned sectors of society, most notably, to the churches and the agencies of the state. However, the mass media are open to anyone wishing to partake of its product, and quite often, the group's message is conveyed to a more receptive audience of the alienated, or simply the curious, and the ranks of the target movement tend to swell in this way. Further, millenarian or messianic groups often become aware of the existence of other oppositional religious movements through this process of anti-cult *alarums* broadcast through the popular media, and the process of alliance or vendetta often results from a careful perusal of the morning newspaper. Such indeed was the case with the Christian Identity- B'nai Noah embrace.

Regardless of the unanticipated effects of publicizing the message of the enemy however, the anti-cult movement does accrue for itself some important benefits. First, it finds itself in something of the position of the high priest of an esoteric god. By

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<sup>3</sup> Kahane in particular drew the attention of dedicated anti-cult groups. In the United States, the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith took the lead in attacking Kahane with a Special Report: Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, *Meir Kahane: In His Own Words* (New York: ADL, 1985). In Israel, several organizations took aim at rabbi Kahane and his party, Kach. Foremost among these is the intellectual club of leftist religious Zionists, Oz veShalom. Oz veShalom has dealt specifically with Kahanism, and in more indirect forms, with Gush Emunim and the Third Temple movement as well. For the most coherent anti-Kahane polemic from this source, see Aviezer Ravitzky, *The Roots of Kahanism: Consciousness and Political Reality*. For the flavor of these anti-Kahane activities in Israel, see "Activities in Israel," *Oz veShalom* 7-8 (Summer/Fall 1986), p. 12.

monitoring, interpreting and disseminating the ideology and the objectives of the target group, the ACM becomes in itself a key player in the drama which appears, by dint of the importance with which the ACM invests its mission, significant beyond its meagre membership. As the ACM holds something of a monopoly on the distant rumblings emanating from the as yet invisible god, the ACM becomes sought after by those interested in the oracular wisdom which the self-appointed priesthood is alone in a position to dispense. With the public recognition of this monopoly comes the perception that the ACM priesthood fulfills a vital social role; a role which must for the common good be performed as efficiently as possible. Thus, funds roll in and the high priests undertake a round of public appearances to enact the timeless role of the 'warner'.<sup>4</sup> In recognition of the demands of modernity, materials must be produced which are suited to a variety of media and a diverse target audience to further spread the message of fear. Finally, in perhaps the greatest irony, there occur subtle but unmistakable changes in the nature of both the evil god and its high priesthood. For just as a generation of American gangsters of the Lucky Luciano and Meir Lansky era of the 1930s were said to have been so affected by James Cagney's Hollywood portrayal of their world that they almost unconsciously came to imitate the actor's cadences, dress, and on-screen attitudes, so too in many ways have the "cult and counter-cult" come to fulfill the most dire constructions one has built of the other. They thus come to exist in symbiosis, the one dependent on the existence of the other for its very *raison de ter*, that is, for its very survival.

A secondary aim of this chapter is to present a consideration of perhaps the most remarkable case of movement/anti-movement symbiosis of all; a brief case study demonstrating the remarkable success of the anti-cult movement in catalyzing widespread public opposition to a construct, indeed, a veritable Jungian archetype, of pure evil which

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<sup>4</sup> Ezekiel 3:19. Cf. *al-Quran, Surat al-Imran*, 3:104, "Enjoin what is right, And forbid what is wrong."

gathers together many of the timeless fears of mankind. This constellation of dread emerges from the medieval constructions of the witch craze no less than the later constructions of the manichaeian nature of the conspiratorial Jew, to emerge as the archetype of the multigenerational Satanist against whom elements of the anti-cult movement expend funds and tireless energy.

### Definition of the Anti-Cult Movement

The term anti-cult movement did not come into vogue until the 1970s, and by strict definition, the movements considered in these pages do not in any sense constitute cults,<sup>5</sup> nor for that matter do the myriad of groups covered under the rubric of ACM constitute anything coherent or organized enough to be called a coordinated movement.<sup>6</sup> Yet just as

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<sup>5</sup> The precise definition of a cult is the subject of considerable scholarly rancor. Most scholars who are concerned with New Religious Movements tend to follow J. Gordon Melton and others in discounting the utility of the term altogether, given the strongly negative connotations which have become attached to it. This is particularly the case in the aftermath of the People's Temple mass suicide in 1978. In deference to this scholarly consensus--a consensus with which this dissertation heartily concurs--no space will be expended in pursuing this unproductive quest for a definition of the term 'cult'. For a cross section of the debate from the scholarly side however, see J. Gordon Melton, *Encyclopedic Handbook of Cults*, pp. 3-20; J. Gordon Melton and Robert L. Moore, *The Cult Experience: Responding to New Religious Pluralism*; David G. Bromley and Anson D. Shupe Jr., *Strange Gods* (Boston: Beacon, 1981), pp. 3-6, 23-24; and from the perspective of the ACMs, Jan Karel Van Baalen, *The Chaos of the Cults*, Fourth Edition, (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1962), pp. 11-17; Una McManus and John Cooper, *Dealing With Destructive Cults* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), pp. 111-116; or Ronald Enroth, et. al, *A Guide to Cults and New Religions* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1983). A recent--and perhaps the best--entry into this literature is George A. Mather and Larry A. Nichols, *Dictionary of Cults, Sects, Religions and the Occult* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1993). For a capsule biography of Jim Jones of the People's Temple, see J. Gordon Melton, *Biographical Dictionary of American Cult and Sect Leaders* (New York: Garland, 1986), pp. 126-127. For an excellent review of the impact of the People's Temple from the perspective of the ACMs, see David G. Bromley and Anson D. Shupe Jr., *The New Vigilantes* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1980), pp. 207-232. For a brilliant meditation on the meaning of the Jonestown affair, see Jonathan Z. Smith, "The Devil in Mr. Jones," in Jonathan Z. Smith, *Imagining Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1982), pp. 102-120.

<sup>6</sup> There are a number of sensitivities in this area that should be noted at the outset. Just as the new religious movements--and the scholars who study them--reject the term cult

the definition of millenarianism has been expanded over the years by scholars interested in bringing under their analytical lens non-Western movements from religious traditions which lack any conception of a post-historical millennial epoch, so too has this dissertation adapted the term anti-cult movement as a matter of scholarly convenience to enable it to encompass an array of groups who have constituted themselves as watchdogs over a broad range of religious organizations.

For the purposes of this dissertation then, the term ACM has been applied to a broad range of groups whose primary purpose is to act as 'watchdogs' (or high priests) over their chosen targets. ACMs in this conception come in many forms, derive from a variety of backgrounds, and possess different ultimate goals and short term capabilities. In general however, an ACM may be defined as any organized group which, motivated primarily by either religion or by secular politics, coalesces in opposition to one or more newly emergent religious movements. An ACM is however, according to this definition, understood to be a small core group of highly motivated individuals who may in time obtain sufficient resources to hire a larger staff, open branch offices, and the like. Yet by definition, the ACM remains a small, largely autonomous organization which may obtain support or resources from religious denominations or governmental entities, but which are in no sense under the control of these larger entities. The key test to be applied to the potential ACM in this conception, and the primary factor which differentiates the ACM from, say, a church or denominational body with which it might otherwise be identified, is the 'single issue' nature of the ACM's mission. The ACM expends its full energies on combatting the particular new religious movement, or group of new religious movements, which it deems threatening. An individual church body, or a religious denomination, or for

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because of its negative connotations, so too do the watchdog groups reject the negative implications of the term anti-cult Movement, preferring the term 'Cult Awareness Movement'. It was decided however, that the suggestion of this article that the definition of the Anti-Cult Movement be broadened--and that the demonization of these groups be halted-- would not be well served by the elimination of the ACM label.

that matter an agency of the state, may fully share the ACM's concerns, but will have a considerably wider scope of interests and activities.

In conclusion then, it should be noted that while the term anti-cult movement is of recent vintage, the perception that it is imperative to form an organized resistance to new religious movements is of considerable antiquity. J. Gordon Melton in fact points out that the first of the modern anti-cult books, this stemming from the evangelical community which until the 1970s was the primary source of ACM activity, was written in 1917.<sup>7</sup> It was not long after this date that individual polemical works gave way to the formation of organized groups, the earliest of which were aimed primarily at the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Church of Latter Day Saints.<sup>8</sup> The 1970s saw a tremendous explosion of creative expressions of religiosity, and with it, a fantastic proliferation of religious ACMs directed against a bewildering variety of targets.<sup>9</sup> Complementing the work of the religious component of the anti-cult movement are a number of purely secular political organizations which have attached themselves to particular religious movements. With this brief definition of terms then, this dissertation will turn to an examination of the anti-cult groups which have become attached to each of the movements considered thus far.

### The Anti-Cult Constellation

To more fully illustrate the rich variety of ACMs which impact on the concerns of this dissertation, a tentative taxonomy is offered below. While the categories offered here

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<sup>7</sup> J. Gordon Melton, *Encyclopedic Handbook of Cults*, p. 221. The volume was William C. Irvine's *Timely Warnings*.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 222.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. Laird Wilcox, in a partial listing of religious ACMs, lists no less than 256, with the majority aimed at the Mormons or the Jehovah's Witnesses! Laird Wilcox, *Guide to the American Occult* (Olathe, KS: Editorial Research Service, 1990).

are preliminary in nature, they do serve to illustrate the diversity of groups whose actions are sufficiently similar to allow for the classification of the organization as an ACM. The primary categories of ACMs under consideration in this chapter include: family centered and apostate groups; political, denominational or philanthropic sub-groups; ACM clearinghouses; and mirror image ACMs. Each of these categories, despite their varied origins and membership compositions, fits comfortably into the broad definition of anti-cult groups offered above. Before continuing on to the case studies then, it may be useful to briefly examine this ACM typology.

Family Centered and Apostate Groups. This is the level in which the popular conception of anti-cult groups--and virtually the whole of the sociological literature dealing with the subject--concentrates. The sociologists David Bromley and Anson Shupe offer a three stage model of ACM groups in this category,<sup>10</sup> positing a formative stage in which relatives and a circle of other concerned individuals come together in response to the decision of a loved one to join one of the many New Religious Movements which emerged in the late 1960s. An important component of these nascent groups are former cult members who, having either left the new religious movement of their own volition or who were 'rescued' by a professional deprogrammer,<sup>11</sup> become key ACM figures. Indeed, a number of ACM groups were formed by disaffected apostate members of New Religious Movements.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> David G. Bromley and Anson Shupe, "The Future of the Anticult Movement," in David G. Bromley and Phillip E. Hammond eds., *The Future of New Religious Movements* (Macon, GA: Mercer, 1987), pp. 235-250.

<sup>11</sup> David G. Bromley and Anson D. Shupe Jr., *The New Vigilantes*, pp. 121-144.

<sup>12</sup> Examples of apostate ACMs are too numerous to list. See Laird Wilcox, *Guide to the American Occult*, for a partial list of these groups and their intended targets. To pick just one of the more successful of these as an illustration, one need look no further than the MacGregor Ministries of British Columbia and Washington State, who primarily target the Jehovah's Witnesses. Ministry head Lori MacGregor produces voluminous tracts, books and video tapes, and has advised Hollywood on films involving cult themes. See the

Should the group survive beyond this initial stage, there occurs a period of expansion in which the movement starts to transcend its *ad hoc* origins and begins to formulate a long term strategy which looks beyond the immediate 'rescue' of individual 'cultists' toward the means which could be taken to combat the cult groups themselves. It is at this point that the ACMs begin the process of making effective contacts with governmental agencies and with other like-minded private organizations, to regularize fund raising, and to at last take its case to the broader public through the media. Finally, there may, if all goes well, occur an institutional stage in which the ACM professionalizes its personnel, hones both its avowed mission and its public message, and finds its niche in the crowded ecology of American interest groups. It is important to note that in the category of family centered groups, it is possible to find secular groups of parents worried about their children in the immediate sense, and about the impact of the target movements on the polity in the broader sense. It is equally common to find in this category specifically religious organizations, including most prominently evangelical and fundamentalist Protestants and conservative and Orthodox Jews.<sup>13</sup> Additionally, it is not unusual to find 'integrated' ACM groups with both secular and religious members in this category.

It is important to note that Israel too has a family centered ACM: the Concerned Parents Against Cults (CPAC). Founded in Haifa in 1980, it was incorporated in 1982 with an initial membership of around sixty families.<sup>14</sup> Despite the vastly different religious

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official organ of the ministry: *MacGregor Ministries* (January, February, March 1992). Cf. letter from Karen Larrigan, manager of the Point Roberts, WA office, 9 July 1991.

<sup>13</sup> The anti-cult literature of the Protestant community has been noted above. For a good overview of anti-cult texts emanating from the Jewish community, see J. Gordon Melton, ed., *Cults and the Jewish Community: Representative Works of Jewish Anti-Cult Literature* (New York: Garland, 1990). For a book-length, albeit more secular, Jewish view, see A. James Rudin and Marcia R. Rudin, *Prison or Paradise: The New Religious Cults* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980).

<sup>14</sup> Francis Yoeli, "The Cult of Awareness," *Jerusalem Post Israeli Edition*, 15 March 1987; and Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi, "Judaism and the New Religions in Israel: 1970:1990," in Zvi Sobel and Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi, eds., *Tradition, Innovation,*



ecology of Israel--a subject that will be considered more fully below--CPAC is organized along the same lines as the American family centered ACMs, and indeed, adopts largely the same tactical and strategic approach to the target movements, borrowing as well American ACM published materials. This should come as little surprise given the involvement, direct and indirect, of American groups and individual activists from both Jewish and Christian ACM groups.<sup>15</sup> However, family centered ACMs, be they in the United States or in Israel, have little direct impact on the movements considered in this dissertation.

Denominational, Philanthropic or Political Subgroups. This category of ACMs are the most directly concerned with the movements under examination in this dissertation. These anti-cult groups often began their organizational existence as either *ad-hoc* committees formed within larger organizations, or as service organizations whose original mission had been accomplished to such a degree that in order to assure continued relevance--and thus survival--a watchdog role had to be adopted. Whatever the precise origins of the group however, they are now configured entirely within the definition of an anti-cult group offered above: a small, relatively autonomous organization which exists solely to monitor its target movement(s), and which, by virtue of its near monopoly of information on the group, forms a kind of exclusive 'priesthood', assuming an almost proprietary right to interpret and disseminate information about its 'esoteric deity'.

Perhaps the least crowded constituent of this category is that of denominational subgroups. Denominational ACMs are those which represent sub-committees of established religious denominations. They are somewhat unusual in that the majority of religiously oriented family centered groups, as all as the ACM clearinghouses, are drawn from

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*Conflict: Jewishness and Judaism in Contemporary Israel* (Albany, NY: SUNY, 1991), p. 209.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 212.

adherents of independent fundamentalist or evangelical Protestant churches. Thus, not surprisingly, denominational ACMs tend to be comprised of more liberal churchmen and women, and as a result, the targets of these groups are invariably right wing, racist movements. A good example of a denominational ACM which is still in its early stages is provided by an ad-hoc subgroup of the Presbyterian Church, formed as a result of concerns expressed at the 198th General Assembly in 1987 regarding the apparent growth of right wing movements in the U.S.<sup>16</sup> Using such source material Anti-Defamation League publications, Center for Democratic Renewal tracts, works by Leonard Zeskind and Lyn Wells, the popular Hollywood film *Betrayed* (Deborah Winger's portrayal is noted for special study), and books such as *The Silent Brotherhood*,<sup>17</sup> the report issued by Dr. John R. Fry and his colleagues reflects alarm at the dangers to society posed by the radical right, with Christian Identity, due to its intense biblicism, singled out for particular attention.

These materials are to be presented in three successive meetings which are to culminate in a cathartic final session in which representatives of minority organizations are invited to share their perceptions of victimization, thus giving the assembled Presbyterians an opportunity for a cleansing joint *mea culpa*. Suggested minority 'confessors' include rabbis or other representatives of organized Jewry, the NAACP, the Urban League, La Raza Unida or LULAC, or representatives of gay rights groups or family planning clinics. How this exercise should ideally work is suggested by the authors:

...When, for instance, a rabbi or other representative of the synagogue directs attention to the majoritarian prejudice involved in the public celebration of Christmas, do group members feel that they are actively part of the prejudiced group? When representatives of racial minorities explain that racial jokes are a particularly virulent form of racial prejudice, do group members identify with the victims of the violence [emphasis mine] or with the joke tellers? When gay

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<sup>16</sup> John R. Fry, "Hate Crime in America," *Church and Society* 80 (May-June 1990), pp. 80-81.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 74-78.

persons describe the violence and abuse they endure, do group members feel that they hold views similar to the perpetrators of the violence or the victim?<sup>18</sup>

Then, having hopefully exposed and overcome the latent hostilities that the group might hold toward any or all of these victims, arrangements are to be made to create an ongoing watchdog group from a core constituency of those attending the meeting:

Before the meeting is concluded, the leader should make sure that each member has a grasp on how to track the white supremacist movement [in their area] from now on...<sup>19</sup>

This last is perhaps the most telling factor in the context of the institutionalization of the *ad-hoc* group as a fully fledged denominational ACM. This work, it must be noted, while funded by the denomination, is largely free of official interference (or perhaps, of interest), forming but one of a number of activities sanctioned by the denomination's General Assembly.

Closely related to denominational sub-groups are philanthropic sub-groups. Indeed, the only real difference between these two categories of ACMs is the direct relationship of the denominational ACMs with their church's sanctioning mechanism as compared to the philanthropic ACMs' distance from their own religious hierarchies. Thus, the most important of these groups, the Anti-Defamation League, while universally identified with Judaism and with Jewish interests, exists as a sub-group of the philanthropic organization, the B'nai B'rith, rather than as an organizational arm of any particular sector of the Jewish rabbinate.<sup>20</sup> The independence from outside control which

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 78.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 79.

<sup>20</sup> The history of the ADL is considered in the following section dealing with British Israelism/Christian Identity.

the ADL has come to enjoy has proved advantageous to the group, allowing it to undertake actions which no responsible denomination would sanction, and few government agencies would undertake, due to considerations ranging from legality to cost.

How closely tied to American internal security agencies the ADL has become has been a matter of conjecture in right wing circles for many years. It was, however, not until a series of legal suits were filed against the ADL by the Lyndon H. LaRouche organization beginning in 1980 that documentary evidence of this relationship began to emerge.<sup>21</sup> As part of this ongoing legal action, LaRouche filed a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request for pertinent FBI documents detailing that agency's cooperation with the ADL. One of the documents obtained through this action is a two page memo with cover sheet dated 4 February 1985, which was transmitted from the office of the Director of the FBI to twenty-five field offices across the country, offering copies of the ADL's 1984 status report on the Ku Klux Klan and on Neo-Nazi activities. More interesting however, is the directive on page two of the document reporting the ADL's 'undertaking' to monitor the activities of "domestic terrorist groups" and to report any information touching on criminal activities to the FBI. The full text of this remarkable document--a document which suggests that a primary covert investigation function of the American internal security apparatus had been at least partially delegated to the ADL--is reproduced below:

Each [FBI field] office is requested to review the attached documents. The Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith [sic] (ADL) has undertaken to monitor and report the activities of domestic terrorists groups [sic], particularly the Ku Klux Klan. On 1/18/85 the New York Division initiated contact with {DELETED} These individuals were advised of the primary jurisdiction of the FBI in civil rights matters. Further, they were advised that any legitimate civil rights allegation should be immediately brought to the attention of the appropriate FBI offi{DELETED} expressed his desire to cooperate and stated he would notify all regional ADL offices of the FBI's responsibility. It was also established that each

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<sup>21</sup> Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, *The LaRouche Political Cult: Packaging Extremism* (New York: ADL, 1986), pp.35-38.

FBI office contact each regional office to establish a liaison and line of communication to promptly receive any allegations of civil rights violations.

Each receiving office should contact the regional ADL Director(s) listed in your Division and establish this liaison. FBIHQ need not be notified of the results of these contacts with the exception of any significant cases or problems. These contacts should be documented in each field office 44-0 file.<sup>22</sup>

Conversely, the very real difficulties which the ADL has had with branches of the U.S. government over the accuracy of their investigations were considered earlier in this dissertation (ch. 2). Their tactics too have come in for considerable criticism.<sup>23</sup> Be these difficulties as they may, the ADL stands unchallenged as the most successful model of a philanthropic ACM in the United States. It long ago defeated its primary rival, the American Jewish Committee, for predominance in the 'priesthood' of the radical right,<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Director, FBI to SACs and ADICs, 4 February 1985. Obtained through Lyndon LaRouche FOIA action, date unknown. The document was provided to this research through non-LaRouche sources who wish to remain anonymous.

<sup>23</sup> Infiltration, disruption and disinformation campaigns figure most prominently in this respect. One such operation came to light on 7 December 1981, when WCCO Minneapolis public television aired a documentary titled "Armies of the Right." Interviews were conducted with alleged members of the 'radical right,' one of whom turned out to be James Rosenberg, an ADL employee with a long history of penetrating as 'agent provocateur' right wing organizations. See "ADL Hoaxes WCCO-TV!" *The Wilcox Report Newsletter* 8 (December 1985), pp. 34-40. For a good picture of the embarrassment to which a government agency may be subjected as a result of relying solely on ADL material is exemplified by the abortive raid on an "extremism and terrorism school" by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms [BATF] on 8-9 February 1984 in the Missouri Ozarks. The resulting fiasco forced the BATF to send out a form letter to all participants at the conference on 28 September 1984 which effectively apologized for having classified, on the basis of ADL information, the groups attending the meeting as "paramilitary" in nature. See "ADL Hoaxes BATF! Agency Recalls Extremism Manual!" undated communication from Laird Wilcox. In fact, the anxiety level--and remarkable dearth of reliable sources--with which the government regards the radical right was related to this writer by a senior academic political scientist in California who, in November 1992, related how less than a year earlier he had been contacted by Rand Corporation terrorism experts and asked to evaluate, in response to a government request, the feasibility of Christian Identity adherents engaging in nuclear terrorism. That a movement most notable for its bare ability to get a word processor to function consistently could leap boldly into the nuclear age, even if it so desired, boggles the mind! Yet the estimate is taken seriously in both state and academic circles.

<sup>24</sup> Naomi W. Cohen, *Not Free to Desist* (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1972), p. 557.

while its latest challenger, the Simon Wiesenthal Center, cognizant of the fact that Nazi war criminals are not a renewable resource and casting about for a new niche in the American organizational universe, seized on the right wing as the most logical alternative.<sup>25</sup> It has yet to make any impression on the ADL's near monopoly position, however.

Political ACMs differ from denominational and philanthropic sub-groups only in that they see their mission as entirely secular; to combat racism, or more broadly, 'hate', and not coincidentally, to promote their own particular political agendas. As these agendas are invariably drawn from the left, it is natural that these groups would aim at right wing movements, often stripping them of their veneer of religiosity to 'reveal' the basic political agendas which they are convinced lurk beneath the 'insincere' cover of religion. If this analysis smacks somewhat of Marxism, it is again no coincidence, as many of the leaders of these groups, Leonard Zeskind and Lynn Wells of the Center for Democratic Renewal, or Chip Berlet of the Political Research Associates, all hail from Marxist backgrounds.<sup>26</sup> Klanwatch, headed by Morris Dees, a flamboyant lawyer from the liberal wing of Democratic politics, is associated with the Southern Poverty Law Center, and is the final member of the troika of major political ACMs in the United States. The activities of these political groups tend to support and magnify the work of the ADL as they too struggle for the recognition--and thus the funding--accorded a 'high priesthood' of the esoteric gods of the extreme right wing.

Israel lacks denominational sub-groups as they are defined in this dissertation. This may seem at first glance surprising as, after all, Israel is configured as a Jewish state with

<sup>25</sup> This tactical shift is presaged in an undated, four page fund raising appeal signed by rabbi Marvin Hier, Dean, Simon Wiesenthal Center, Los Angeles, CA (c. November 1991).

<sup>26</sup> Laird Wilcox, "Lenny Zeskind, Lyn Wells and the Center for Democratic Renewal Including Chip Berlet and Political Research Associates: The Hidden 'Links' and 'Ties' of an 'Anti-Extremist' Organization," special report from Editorial Research Service of Olathe, Kansas (March 1989).

Judaism, at least nominally, the state religion. Yet, while the Orthodox rabbinate has on the local level manifested considerable hostility to the small number of 'cults' which have been imported to Israel, the Chief Rabbinate has taken little direct action against these groups.<sup>27</sup> This may be explained not only by the small number of adherents of new religions in Israel, but more centrally, by the far greater threat to Orthodoxy posed by the appeal of the Conservative and Reformed streams of Judaism.<sup>28</sup> Secondly, a primary constraint on membership in this category of denominational ACMs is the presence of a considerable degree of autonomy from the sponsoring ecclesiastical body. The possibility of a sub-group achieving such autonomy within the context of the Chief Rabbinate's somewhat Byzantine bureaucracy, not to mention the wider state bureaucracy of Israel, is as remote as, say, the *waqf* (endowments) authorities gaining autonomy from the ulama, and the wider state apparatus, in the Islamic world.

Arguably in fact, even if one of the small number of anti-missionary sub-groups within the machinery of the Chief Rabbinate were to achieve sufficient independence to be considered as a denominational ACM, the Chief Rabbinate--effectively the only denominational game in town--has been positively benign, indeed, supportive, of the Jewish or Judaizing movements considered in this dissertation. Gush Emunim, even in its intermittent phases of vigilante violence or opposition to the authority of the state, has encountered only the mildest of rebukes from the Chief Rabbinate, while the B'nai Noah have forged an alliance with the Sephardi Chief Rabbi. Thus, it would be surprising indeed if an 'anti-cult movement' stemming from denominational quarters were to target either group.

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<sup>27</sup> Nurit Zaidman-Dvir and Stephen Sharot, "The Response of Israeli Society to New Religious Movements: ISKCON and Teshuva," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 31 (1992), pp. 284-291.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 285. For more in depth coverage of this inter-Jewish tension, see Charles S. Leibman and Eliezer Don-Yehiya, *Civil Religion in Israel: Traditional Judaism and Political Culture in the Jewish State*.

Philanthropic sub-groups too have had little concern with Gush Emunim activity. These have had a considerable impact on the growth of New Religious Movements in Israel and, together with the Concerned Parents Against Cults, succeeded in triggering a government investigation into the growth of 'cults'. This government panel, the Inter-ministerial Commission of Inquiry on Cults, met from 1982-1987, taking up considerable time and energy, but producing little of tangible value.<sup>29</sup> It is in this category that the most important components of the Israeli ACM movements are to be found. Yad La'Ahim, a *teshuva* (recall or revitalization) movement, is primarily aimed at combatting Christian missionary activity, and it concentrates as well on trying to prevent Jewish intermarriage. However, with the upsurge of interest in 'cult' activity in Israel in the 1980s, it has formed a sub-group aimed at fighting new religions in Israel which has been remarkable effective.<sup>30</sup> American philanthropic ACMs have been active in Israel as well.<sup>31</sup> Gush Emunim, however, is far too authentically Jewish to have drawn opposition from this quarter.

This leaves only the political sub-groups. Here, the Gush has found its most vocal opposition, although by strict definition, none of the movements noted as interested in Gush Emunim actually meet the criteria for inclusion in this category, lacking as they do both a sense of the singularity of their mission and of the necessity to monopolize access to their chosen targets. In the interest of offering a complete picture of ACM activity however, it is important to note the activities of these groups, and the political sub-groups category offers them the closest 'family resemblance' possible in this taxonomy.

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<sup>29</sup> Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi, "Judaism and the New Religions in Israel: 1970:1990," pp. 213-215.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., pp. 210-211.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 212.



With this disclaimer then, this opposition has ranged from the far left of the Israeli political spectrum--most notably from elements of Peace Now--to the liberal Jewish Orthodoxy of such groups as Oz VeShalom. In both cases, the activists involved in these groups represent a dedicated sub-group of a larger movement. In neither case however, have any of these sub-groups sought to become an exclusive priesthood to their chosen targets, highlighting a primary difference between the Israeli and American contexts. The American political ACMs seek a monopoly on their expertise in the national arena, aiming at influencing the political process on the local and national levels. The Israeli groups, conversely, do not, for a variety of reasons, appear to aspire to this exclusiveness. More, the Israeli groups give considerably more attention to international outreach than do the American groups, aiming much of their appeal at a constituency of secular Israeli Jews and, more centrally, at the wider world of diaspora Jewry.

Peace Now was formed in the wake of the disastrous invasion of Lebanon in 1982, euphemistically styled Operation Peace for Galilee.<sup>32</sup> Although it has evolved into a political party with parliamentary representation, there remains a sub-group within the movement which can be counted upon to turn out in the Occupied Territories in opposition to any manifestation of settlement activity undertaken by Gush Emunim, and in these activities, Peace Now reflects most closely in the Israeli context a political sub-group operating as an ACM. Yet there is no evidence that these activities are undertaken by an autonomous sub-group with Peace Now, nor that these actions represent anything more institutionalized than ad-hoc collections of sympathizers mobilized against a particular settlement action on a one time only basis. These activities moreover, operate primarily at the symbolic level--seldom rising to violent confrontations of any kind--although they are

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<sup>32</sup> For the best military autopsy of this adventure, see Richard A. Gabriel, *Operation Peace for Galilee*. For a spiritual journey into the event, see Jacobo Timmerman, *The Longest War: Israel in Lebanon*, Miguel Acoca, trans., (New York: Vintage, 1982). On the role of Peace Now, see Ehud Sprinzak, "The Iceberg Model of Political Extremism," In David Newman, ed., *The Impact of Gush Emunim*; and Ian Lustick, *For the Land and the Lord*.

viewed as serious by the Gush in that 'anti-Jewish' activities of this sort are seen, in GE parlance, as weakening the Jewish hold on the land, which in turn delays the process of messianic redemption. Undaunted, Peace Now has expanded its mission (and its fund raising efforts) to the U. S.<sup>33</sup>

A second front in the battle against Gush Emunim is comprised of groups formed among liberal Orthodox Israeli Jews who, judging by the considerable amount of literature which they generate, are concerned most fundamentally with the dangers of unchecked messianism which they perceive to be at the core of Gush Emunim's appeal, and which, given the unhappy historical experience of Jews in the wake of failed messianisms, they seek by all means available to derail. The most prolific of these groups, Oz VeShalom,<sup>34</sup> is spear-headed by such senior Israeli academics as the late Uriel Tal, Yehezkel Landau, Michael Rosenak, and many others. As this distinguished roster implies, Oz VeShalom is very much a vehicle for Orthodox academics working in the secular university system to get across a message of peace. The message itself is cast in the form of lectures and scholarly articles, appearing in Oz VeShalom's own eponymous journal, or in other equally academic vehicles, such as *Morasha*. As one might imagine, the audience for this highly intellectual appeal is quite limited, and to expand its influence, Oz VeShalom does publish in English, and aim much of their material at an American market.<sup>35</sup> Yet in the final analysis, this group of concerned religious academics are not made of the stuff of the ACM groups. Their appeals are too abstract in nature to allow for a group like Oz VeShalom to focus on a single group or set of groups, while, more telling, the passionate attachment of

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<sup>33</sup> "U.S. Peace Now Starts Lobby, Enlistment Drive," *Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 28 July 1990.

<sup>34</sup> Closely allied, but less prolific, is Netivot Shalom.

<sup>35</sup> Letter from Yehezkel Landau, Information Secretary, Oz VeShalom, 3 May 1988. Cf. any issue of *Oz VeShalom*, or, for an introduction to the group's aims, *Religious Zionism: Challenges & Choices* (Jerusalem: Oz VeShalom Publications #1, n.d.).

these scions of the Western academy to the vital role of dialogue and rational argumentation makes them far too committed to democratic principles to seek to interpose themselves between the target movement and that group's access to the national public policy debate.

ACM Clearinghouses. The ACM Clearinghouse stands at the apex of the religious anti-cult movement. While an ACM in this category may well have started its life as a family centered group, it has gone beyond Bromley and Shupe's conception of an institutionalized ACM in that it has become a repository of information, files, documents, and teaching materials such as videos and cassette recordings, etc., which the anti-cult movement as a whole is able to access as a primary resource. Indeed, the mark of a successful ACM Clearinghouse is its ability to transcend the world the ACMs and of the wider universe of the religious community, and to serve as a resource for the dominant culture, fielding inquiries from the public, the press, academics, and from governmental agencies. The primary keys to membership in this category are, on the one hand, nearly unfettered autonomy, while on the other, the ability of the organization to enjoy its status as a reliable resource for the secular society *without having to compromise its original character in any way*. Interestingly, the most successful of these groups, ACMs like the Cult Awareness Network (CAN) in Chicago, the Christian Apologetics: Research and Information Service (CARIS) of Milwaukee, or the Spiritual Counterfeits Project (SCP) in California, are the smallest ACM groups in terms of professional staff: CARIS is essentially a one man operation headed by Jack Roper while CAN has but five paid staff members divided between headquarters in Chicago and Los Angeles.<sup>36</sup> At the level of the ACM

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<sup>36</sup> Conversation with Jack Roper, 23 December 1992. Harold Henderson, "CAN of Worms," *Chicago Reader*, 16 October 1992, p. 16. *SCP Newsletter* 15:2 (1990), and letter from Stuart Chevre, Spiritual Counterfeits Project, 28 June 1991. John A. Saliba, "The Christian Response to the New Religions: A Critical Look at the Spiritual Counterfeits Project," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 18 (Summer 1981), pp. 451-473. For a representative sampling of the literature emanating from these groups, see Anson S. Shupe,

Clearinghouse, with the sole exception of the Cult Awareness Network, there appear to be only ACM organizations emanating from the conservative Protestant world, with fundamentalist and evangelical adherents predominating.<sup>37</sup>

The primary direct impact of the American ACM clearinghouses are on the more global--and thus less substantial--'grand demons' of U. S. society: the 'Satanism scare' standing out as the most visible. Their real importance however, is less in what actions they may take directly (indeed, they undertake very few independent actions) than in the influence they exert over other ACMs, the news media and the American judicial and political system. This influence is magnified by the ability of these clearinghouses to network and share their resources with other forms of ACM organization.<sup>38</sup>

It should be noted in this context that Israel too has an ACM clearinghouse of sorts which closely matches the activities of the American clearinghouses. This is the West Bank Data Project, headed by Meron Benvenisti, whose careful monitoring of the activities of West Bank settlers provides the data upon which journalists from the around the world, the international diplomatic and academic communities, and the Israeli left base their decisions regarding the West Bank.<sup>39</sup>

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Jr, David G. Bromley and Donna L. Oliver, *The Anti-Cult Movement in America: A Bibliography and Historical Survey* (New York: Garland, 1984), pp. 60-80.

<sup>37</sup> Harold Henderson, "CAN of Worms," *Chicago Reader*, 16 October 1992. Contrary to this source, there are a number of secular individuals associated with CAN.

<sup>38</sup> For example, the May 1991 conference sponsored by the Chicago affiliate of the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith which featured a program on: "Extremist Cults--Purveyors of Bigotry." See "Remarks Presented by Cynthia Kisser, Executive Director, Cult Awareness Network," unpublished speech delivered on 6 May 1991 to the Chicago Anti-Defamation League's Forum Series.

<sup>39</sup> WBDP material is utilized heavily in the chapter dealing with Gush Emunim, and need not be repeated here. The following journalistic pieces are of some use in coming to know Meron Benvenisti and his work: Meron Benvenisti, "Growing Up in Jerusalem," *New York Times Magazine*, 16 October 1988; and "Hard Facts Defeat Israeli Researcher," *New York Times*, 22 October 1989.

Mirror Image ACMs. There are remarkably few organizations which fit the description of mirror image ACMs, yet they represent an important category in that they illustrate both the symbiotic nature of the ACM/target group relationship and the degree to which the members of what this dissertation terms a 'millennial community', lacking a significant degree of contact with the dominant culture, come to communicate primarily with each other. Over the course of time, in fact, they begin to rather closely resemble each other, despite the anguished protestations to the contrary by all concerned. In this conception then, a mirror image ACM is in fact a watchdog group formed by the target movement which seeks to either consciously act in the image of the group which has undertaken to monitor it, or to set itself up in the image of a well known member of the watchdog community whose success the mirror image ACM wishes to emulate.

A striking example of a mirror image ACM is Der Freikorps, centered in Victoria, Texas. Der Freikorps, a small group of Hitler cultists, set up in conscious imitation of Morris Dees' Klanwatch, *Jew Watch*, a publication which intermixes translations of Nazi era anti-Semitic propaganda with current news. The latter is notable for its insertion into standard news wire stories adjectival phrases advising the reader of the Jewish ancestry of many of the news makers of the day, as well as for its remarkable facility with superimposing Nazi era yellow stars onto the clothing of Jews depicted in news photos.<sup>40</sup>

The occult world too is developing some facility with mirror image ACMs. One of the more effective of these is from the world of wiccan witchcraft, the Wiccan Information

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<sup>40</sup> See any issue of *Jew Watch*. In August, 1992 Der Freikorps began a new publication which purports to be the revival of the Nazi era German newspaper, *Der Stürmer*. The premier issue demonstrates a considerable diminution of the basic literacy of *Jew Watch*, but does show the same remarkable touch with photographs. Depicted on the cover is Bill Clinton speaking at a Friends of Israel podium while above him a dwarfish Micky Cantor, his campaign manager, floats on a cloud manipulating strings attached to Clinton's hands, while a six pointed star floats like a halo over Cantor's head. "Jew String Puller Behind Clinton," *Der Stürmer* 1 (August 1992), p. 1.

Network (WIN), run by a Vancouver neo-pagan policeman, Kerr Cuhulain.<sup>41</sup> WIN developed out of the Witches League for Public Awareness (WLPA), a group that Kerr Cuhulain co-founded, with the intention of combatting both the perceived negative images of witches in popular culture and opposing the work of such ACM figures as Jack Roper and Jack Chick, as well as such 'occult cops' as Larry Jones.<sup>42</sup> It is with WIN however, that the concept of the mirror image ACM--and indeed, the portrait of the world of ACMs as an interactive community which transcends the bounds of ideology or social status in an environment which remains largely invisible to the dominant culture--becomes clear:

We've found in our work [at WIN] that some of our greatest support comes from other anti-defamation leagues, like the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, because they're in the same boat. When you find somebody who is anti-Pagan, they are almost invariably anti-Catholic, anti-Semitic, anti-Freemason, anti-everything, you name it, because their way is the only way.<sup>43</sup>

While such premillenarian fundamentalists and evangelicals as Jerry Falwell, Chuck Smith, or Hal Lindsay, passionate advocates of Israel and the prophetic role of the Jews all, may disagree, the ADL nonetheless remains an organizational 'model for emulation' among mirror image ACMs. Witness the latest entry in the field from the neo-pagan world, the Witches' Anti-Defamation League in New York.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Kerr Cuhulain, "Ritualistic, Cult and Occult Crime," *Witchcraft, Satanism and Occult Crime: Who's Who and What's What*, Third Edition, (January 1991), p. 7.

<sup>42</sup> John Dellea, "Kerr Cuhulain Pagan Policeman," *Llewellyn's New Worlds of Mind and Spirit* (January/February 1993), p. 39. On Larry Jones and his newsletter, *File 18*, see Robert D. Hicks, *In Pursuit of Satan: The Police and the Occult* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1991), pp. 38-55.

<sup>43</sup> John Dellea, "Kerr Cuhulain Pagan Policeman," p. 39.

<sup>44</sup> "Resources and References," *Witchcraft, Satanism and Occult Crime: Who's Who and What's What*, p. 19.

A unique recent entrant into the world of mirror image ACMs is the remarkable grouping of self styled academic 'forensic religionists', the Association of World Academics for Religious Education, headed by James R. Lewis of the Center for Academic Publication in Goleta, California. Under the acronym AWARE, this organization was formed in reaction to the deprogramming controversies which erupted in the late 1970s and which have yet to fully abate, as a conscious anti-anti-cult grouping--i.e., a mirror image ACM. The original impetus for the group appears to have been a series of contacts and meetings in 1989 spearheaded by Jeffrey Hadden of the University of Virginia, Eileen Barker of the London School of Economics, and David Bromley of Virginia Commonwealth University, which sought to gather an effective organization of academics who would be ready and willing to enter into the battle of expert witnesses in civil and criminal court battles against the ACM 'experts' who appear to have a monopoly in the forensic field.<sup>45</sup> While its goals were and are laudable, the organization has been controversial, both for the risks of academics being drawn into the 'cult wars' as active participants and, more immediately, for its approaches to various New Religious Movements for funding.<sup>46</sup> While these approaches do not seem to have been successful--NRMs with resources of this magnitude are notoriously loath to fund groups which they don't fully control<sup>47</sup>--by 1992 AWARE was sufficiently organized to begin announcing its existence with a series of press conferences at which its founding document, a four page press release (replete with footnotes!) was distributed to all and sundry.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> See the confidential memorandum from Jeffrey Hadden (on behalf of Eileen Barker and David Bromley), "Social scientists concerned about forensic and related issues dealing with New Religious Movements," 20 December 1989. The ten page memorandum, supplied to this research by sources who wish to remain anonymous, offers suggestions for a number of proposed activities for the as yet unnamed group.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Association of World Academics for Religious Education, "A Social-Scientific Perspective on Cults, Brainwashing, and Deprogramming," n.d.

A copy of a notification of a press conference in Los Angeles, dated 9 November 1992, has been made available to this research. It announces a joint appearance by James Lewis and Henry Kriegal. According to ACM sources interviewed in this research, Kriegal is associated with the Church Universal and Triumphant headed by Elizabeth Clair Prophet. This direct association, by no means uncommon, of AWARE with adherents of NRMs is at the heart of the ACM criticism of the organization. It is this mutual enmity between the ACMs and AWARE--an enmity which fully defines the mission of the latter--which distinguishes the Association of World Academics for Religious Education as a fully fledged mirror image ACM.

Finally, in perhaps the most remarkable case of an attempt--ultimately stillborn--to form a mirror image ACM, we need only note once again the attempt by a group of senior Identity pastors led by such figures as Earl Jones and Paul Hall, to set up a watchdog group on the B'nai Noah! This oddity will be considered more fully below.

In Israel, Gush Emunim has not felt constrained to set up anything resembling a mirror image ACM while the B'nai Noah, given their acceptance in the Orthodox rabbinical community, would hardly need to consider taking such a step.

With this still very preliminary taxonomy complete, this dissertation may now turn to the relevant case studies.

### Christian Identity

From its inception as a religious movement marked by a prophetic sense of mission and a high level of proselyting activity, British-Israelism, the forerunner of Christian Identity, found itself under siege from opponents who were at first primarily connected



with the Anglican Church.<sup>49</sup> This controversy did not constitute an ACM activity however, as the Church had numerous other interests on its plate. Indeed, the British government was rather friendly towards a movement which, however idiosyncratically, lent support to its imperial ambitions.<sup>50</sup> Yet this Anglican attack on British-Israel doctrines did leave behind a legacy of polemic literature which later individuals and ACM leaders would adopt as their own.

In the United States, Christian apologists tended primarily to concentrate their criticisms of British-Israel doctrines on what they believed to be the deviant hermeneutics of British Israelites rather than on the social or political ramifications of the belief system. This line of argumentation stemmed primarily from the influential body of nineteenth century British-Israel literature which was on the whole rather philo-Semitic in tone. This school of British-Israelism, more reminiscent of Richard Brothers than of Richard Butler, saw British-Israelism as reuniting the house of Israel by bringing the House of Judah (i.e., modern day Jews) together with the lost tribes; revealed at last as the European nations.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> The attack on British-Israel beliefs emanating from the Church of England is still recalled with considerable bitterness today. See "The Identity Movement in Britain," *Wake Up!* (September/October 1991), p. 178.

<sup>50</sup> The relationship between the British government and Anglo-Israelism is a tortuously complex tale. As early as 1795, parliamentary support in the person of Nathaniel Brassey Halhead for the earliest and most idiosyncratic theorist of what would become British-Israel beliefs, Richard Brothers, was offered on the Commons floor. J. F. C. Harrison, *The Second Coming*, p. 76. This British upper class following is noted with some disdain by the American critics of British-Israelism. See Anton Darms, *The Delusion of British-Israelism* (New York: Loizeaux Brothers Bible Truth Depot, c. 1939), p. 5; and Herbert M. Wyrick, *Seven Religious Isms: An Historical and Scriptural Review* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1941), p. 90. This booklet was recently reprinted in J. Gordon Melton, ed., *The Evangelical Christian Anti-Cult Movement* (New York: Garland, 1990). For a brief introduction to British-Israel's historic development, see J. Gordon Melton, *The Encyclopedia of American Religions*, Second Edition, pp. 83-84.

<sup>51</sup> For a good example of these beliefs, see Rev. Thomas Rosling Howlett, *Anglo-Israel and the Jewish Problem* (Philadelphia, PA: Press of Spangler & Davis, 1892). The subtitle of this volume reveal clearly the author's intent: "The ten lost tribes of Israel found and Identified in the Anglo-Saxon race. The Jewish problem solved in the Reunion of Israel and Judah, and restoration of the Israelitish Nation."

The criticism of British-Israel hermeneutics was telling. This attack took two complimentary tracks. It derided on the one hand the British-Israelite contention that on the basis of their interpretation of biblical passages--texts which their critics insisted were taken wildly out of context or dependent on baseless linguistic suppositions--irefutable proof for the identification of the Anglo-Saxon peoples with Israel had been found. Secondly, these religious critics derided the many layers of occult beliefs, pyramidism in particular, which had over the years become central strands of British-Israel doctrine. A good sampling of this criticism was offered in the 1920s by Rev. L. E. P. Erith, the Warden of St. Peter's Theological College in Kingston, Jamaica. In blunt terms, he states the case against British-Israelism:

...we can easily understand why all theologians and historians ignore [British-Israelism]; for all British-Israel "proofs" are based on impossible exegesis and untrue history, and form a lamentable compound of prejudice and credulity. In pursuing a chimera of ignorance the British-Israelites find themselves overwhelmed by the magnitude of the task they have undertaken, and so they are led on from one absurdity to another...in their efforts to establish a fallacy.<sup>52</sup>

Rev. Erith goes on to take British-Israelites to task for a variety of scholarly sins. Specific linguistic errors are decried, but at the center of the attack is British-Israel's jumbling together of a melange of historical supposition, ancient folk tales and pre-Christian myths which resulted in the claim that the genealogy of King George V could be traced back to King David via the marriage of an Irish King to an Israelite woman, Tea-

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<sup>52</sup> Rev. L. E. P. Erith, "The Fallacy of British Israelism," *The Review of the Churches* VI (April 1929), pp. 194-195.

Tephi by name.<sup>53</sup> It is a line of attack which later Christian apologists would take up and expand upon considerably.<sup>54</sup>

Following closely upon the anti-British-Israel school of Christian apologetics came a body of literature which can be clearly identified as a true anti-cult polemic. For the first time, British-Israelism was decried not only in terms of being a modern day heresy, but its organized existence was now being posited as a threat to the Christian community, and, by something of a remarkable leap of logic, to the well being of the American republic. The most important early figure in this development was J. K. Van Baalen.

Van Baalen to be sure incorporated the work of the earlier polemicists. British-Israel hermeneutics were again the object of derision, and the occultist aspects of the belief system were held up to ridicule. Pyramidism in particular is utilized in Van Baalen's skillful prose to evoke contempt for British-Israel theology even before the central doctrine itself is put on the dissecting table.<sup>55</sup> Yet Van Baalen's approach was considerably

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., pp. 198-199.

<sup>54</sup> Arguably the most influential of these polemics, and certainly the most thorough, is the work of a Duke University professor of Old Testament studies, Allen H. Godby, *The Lost Tribes a Myth: Suggestions Towards Rewriting Hebrew History*. Godby did not write specifically against British-Israel theory, but in over 700 pages, he managed to destroy piece by piece virtually every facet of British-Israel belief. Apologists taking aim specifically at British-Israelism lost no time in appropriating his material. See for example, Anton Darms, *The Delusion of British-Israelism*, which lists Godby as a reference. Darms makes his own intent clear in a hand written dedication which appears in the copy of the volume in my possession:

In defense of the Inspired Word of God concerning His chosen people Israel-The Jews, who have a greater history awaiting them in the future than they ever had in the past.

From the Author  
Anton Darms

Zion, Illinois  
March 25, [19]39

<sup>55</sup> Rev. J. K. Van Baalen, *The Gist of the Cults: Christianity Versus False Religion* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1944), p. 56. This booklet

different than earlier writers. He saw British-Israel as but one of a number of new religious movements that he identified in aggregate as cults, defined expansively as any belief system which deviated from the fundamentals of Protestant Christianity--especially in its Evangelical form.<sup>56</sup> Indeed, he feels constrained on the first page to defend his decision to exclude Roman Catholicism from his list of cults.<sup>57</sup> What was new however, was that the comparative approach provided insights unavailable to the earlier apologists. In particular, Van Baalen was the first to identify the strong doctrinal affinity between Mormonism and British-Israelism--a point that would be lost on scholars until the recent work of James Aho.<sup>58</sup> This affinity emerged in this dissertation in the person of Dan Gayman's evolution from a Mormon splinter sect to the heart of the Identity world, and does much to explain why a current epicenter of Identity theology is in the American mountain west. A second innovation of Van Baalen's approach was the assertion that British-Israelism threatened the peace and prosperity of the state itself. This view was couched in two related areas: social tranquility and political stability. Of the former, Van Baalen was one of the first to detect and decry the drift of British-Israelism from its rather philo-Semitic origins into the anti-Semitic doctrine of Christian Identity in the 1930s:

...British-Israel literature does not bother with speaking of the deity of the saviour or the atonement of the unworthy ones in His blood. It speaks of the greatness of men, of some, nay, many men. Their greatness is to be sought in physical descent or adoption, as the Pharisees of old considered themselves the chosen people, and

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was recently reprinted in J. Gordon Melton, ed., *The Evangelical Christian Anti-Cult Movement*, p. 156.

<sup>56</sup> Jan Karel Van Baalen, *The Chaos of the Cults*, Fourth Edition, pp. 11-17.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., pp. 162-164. J. K. Van Baalen, *The Gist of the Cults: Christianity Versus False Religion*, p. 56. James Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness*. The primary point of identification offered is significant: the belief that the United States as an entity, and its instrumentalities of sovereignty such as the Constitution, are both invested with an aura of the sacred.

despised all others except those drawn into their own circle as proselytes.<sup>59</sup>

Politically, Van Baalen warned that British-Israelism is in essence an imperialistic doctrine, which risks shifting public attention from the "spiritual to the material and economic" which would "lull us to sleep in a time of world distress, substituting for the one time Pax Romanica and Hitler's dream of a Pax Germanica a fancied Pax Saxonica."<sup>60</sup> Worse, Van Baalen correctly recognized the manichaeian implications of the triumphalism of British-Israel doctrine:

It makes a stench in the nostrils of the communists and other foes of the democratic nations by declaring them to be invincible according to Isaiah 54:17, and stating that their foot shall be on the neck of their enemies.<sup>61</sup>

After Van Baalen, a curious event occurred, or more precisely, failed to occur. While other 'cults' were becoming the target of structured anti-cult organizations, as far as the Christian anti-cult movement was concerned, British-Israelism, now almost fully transformed into Christian Identity, simply dropped off the map. Identity not only drew no organized Christian opposition, but even the counter-cult polemicists whose numbers

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<sup>59</sup> Jan Karel Van Baalen, *The Chaos of the Cults*, Fourth Edition, p. 173. In less allusive language, Van Baalen in the same chapter credits Ralph L. Roy with pointing out the racist aspects of British-Israel, emphasizing in particular Howard Rand, James A. Lovell, Wesley Swift (Van Baalen does not fail to note Swift's connection with the movement of Gerald L. K. Smith), and Denver's William Blessing (p. 165). Cf. Ralph Lord Roy, *Apostles of Discord*. Roy's book is a general warning against racist or fascist tendencies among a number of religious groups or individuals. It in no way constitutes an anti-cult document as the term is defined here.

<sup>60</sup> J. K. Van Baalen, *The Gist of the Cults: Christianity Versus False Religion*, p. 60.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid. Isaiah 54:17 states: "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgement thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me saith the Lord."

exploded in the 1970s seemed to have forgotten that the movement existed.<sup>62</sup> Why this came about is, given the limited resources of this dissertation, impossible to reliably reconstruct. However, several developments in the critical WWII period are suggestive of a possible explanation.

In this post-Van Baalen period, as British-Israelism metamorphosed into Christian Identity, the religious community simply does not seem to have evinced great interest in the movement. The great questions which were roiling the churches in the late 1930s and in the aftermath of the second World War were clearly occupied with questions considered by most churchmen to be more pressing than the pursuit of a small, heterodox sect. Certainly ecumenism was being debated, and a primary facet of this debate concerned on a national level concerned the activities of the National Council of Churches. The more sharply politicized debates surrounding the so-called Faith and Order Movement which would come to a head in 1948 at the first Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam was taken up as well. The vital religious questions of the day were rapidly devolving into a reflection of the Cold War.<sup>63</sup> British-Israelism, and more so Christian Identity, with its virulent anti-Communism and extraordinary millennial excitement, were in no position to weigh into this debate in a manner that would be noticed by either side. More, evangelicals, the backbone of the early formally constituted anti-cult movements, were themselves becoming increasingly marginal actors as the movement itself splintered under the pressure of rapidly changing conditions in the post-war world.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> The closest recent anti-cult apologetic which this research has been able to unearth is a tract against Herbert W. Armstrong's Worldwide Church of God disseminated by the Jesus People USA of Chicago. Jesus People USA, "The Plain Truth about Herbert W. Armstrong," (1983).

<sup>63</sup> For a detailed insider's account of these issues through the perspective of the World Council of Churches, see David P. Gaines, *The World Council of Churches* (Peterborough, NH: Richard R. Smith Noone House, 1966).

<sup>64</sup> Timothy P. Weber, *Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming*, ch. 8.

This is not to say that the Identity movement was to be left to its own devices. Instead, a new, far more secular constellation of foes discovered the Identity, found it to be the antithesis of all that was good and true, and locked onto the movement in an embrace which to this day has yet to abate. This new enemy arose in the form of the organized American Jewish community<sup>65</sup>; no surprise given the Identity doctrine of Jews being the descendents of of the unholy coupling of Eve and Satan in the Garden of Eden! How the Jewish community first became aware of the esoteric world of Christian Identity is a question of some interest, but one for which this dissertation is able to offer only a hypothesis in lieu of solid documentary evidence. Yet while indisputable proof is lacking, it is highly likely that the discovery of Christian Identity by the organized Jewish community in the form of the American Jewish Committee (AJC) and the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith<sup>66</sup> was the result of these organizations' intense interest in the movement of Gerald L. K. Smith. At the heart of this movement was a young Ku Klux Klansman and Christian Identity minister who would have a profound impact on Smith's later years, and even more, upon the radicalization of the Identity movement itself: Wesley Swift. It is highly likely that the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) discovered the Identity world through its investigations of Smith, and that for them, Wesley Swift came to personify the Identity message.

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<sup>65</sup> Despite the close identification of these ACMs with the Jewish community, the activities of these groups must be considered to be primarily in the realm of secular politics rather than in that of religion. The Jewish groups had little interest in refuting Identity hermeneutics. Rather, their actions were and are aimed at isolating Identity from contact with the surrounding culture.

<sup>66</sup> The American Jewish Committee was founded in 1906, the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith in 1913, both by German Jews in the U.S., and both were invested with similar missions. Robert M. Seltzer, *Jewish People, Jewish Thought*, p. 645. Cf. David A. Gerber, "Anti-Semitism and Jewish-Gentile Relations in American Historiography and the American Past," in David A. Gerber, ed., *Anti-Semitism in American History* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1986), p. 22; and Deborah Dash Moore, *B'nai B'rith and the Challenge of Ethnic Leadership* (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1981), ch. 5.

The American Jewish Committee first focused on the activities of Gerald L. K. Smith on a formal level in May 1947 when, alarmed at the apparent success of Smith and other right wingers at linking Jews to Soviet communism, the AJC executive committee met to form a plan of attack against the Smith crusade.<sup>67</sup> This and subsequent meetings failed to come to an agreement on a coherent strategy, due primarily to the delicate balance of the body politic in this, the first flush of the Cold War. Soviet Jews were simply too deeply involved in the Soviet state, and with the international communist movement as well, just as they were in the anti-communist organizations around the world, for the Jewish community to risk weighing in fully any particular aspect of the communism controversy.<sup>68</sup> Making a virtue of indecision, the strategy which both the ADL and AJC eventually arrived at was termed at the time "dynamic silence." Championed by R. S. A. Fineberg of the AJC, the idea was to close off all access to the public media--and thus the larger culture--to "rabble rousers" such as Smith.<sup>69</sup> This decision would mark the moment in time when the millenarian right would gradually fade from direct access to the popular media, and thus the public consciousness, leaving the 'watchdog' organizations such as the ADL and AJC in a position to assume stewardship of the public exposure of the movement.

It was not until the attempt by Smith and others to block the appointment of Anna M. Rosenberg as an assistant secretary of defense in 1950 that both the American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League opened a full fledged attack on Gerald L. K. Smith, bringing charges of anti-Semitism before the United States Senate.<sup>70</sup> By then, the tactics employed by the ADL and the AJC were well honed: to identify potential anti-

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<sup>67</sup> Naomi W. Cohen, *Not Free to Desist*, p. 346.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid. The fate of Jews in the Soviet Union was a critical factor in this decision as well.

<sup>69</sup> Glen Jeansonne, "Combating Anti-Semitism: The Case of Gerald L. K. Smith," in David A. Gerber, ed., *Anti-Semitism in American History* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1986), pp. 158-160.

<sup>70</sup> Naomi W. Cohen, *Not Free to Desist*, pp. 360-361.



Semites and to seek to preempt if possible, to halt if not, their activities by putting pressure on elected officials and on local and national newspapers, by printing the names of suspected anti-Semites, and by distributing 'educational' materials intended to neutralize criticism of the Jewish community.<sup>71</sup> For the rest of Smith's career, the ADL and AJC would serve as more accurate gauges of the Smith phenomenon than would Gerald L. K. Smith himself.<sup>72</sup>

Given this intensive scrutiny of Gerald Smith, it is inconceivable that so visible a figure as Wesley Swift could have escaped the attention of either the ADL or the AJC. The dynamics of the Smith/Swift relationship appears to be a matter of some controversy among historians of the period. Of particular importance here is whether Swift influenced Smith, or perhaps converted him altogether towards the end of his life, to a belief in the Christian Identity message. In an earlier chapter, this dissertation offered a quotation from Smith's later years indicating at least a strong familiarity with the Identity gospel. That quote, in brief, was:

True enough, the real Israel which came out of the seed of Abraham...were chosen of God for a special holy purpose (the salvation of mankind). But the people who say they are Jews and are not, and who are of the synagogue of Satan...have no relationship to the true Israel...<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid., pp. 374-377.

<sup>72</sup> Indeed, the ADL in particular is sighted as a prime reference for checking the accuracy of Smith's claims. See Ralph Lord Roy, *Apostles of Discord*, p. 65; and David H. Bennett, *Demagogues in the Depression* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1969), p. 286. For Smith's side of the alleged persecution visited on him and his associates by the Jewish organizations, see House Committee on Un-American Activities, *Investigation of Un-American Propaganda Activities in the United States* (Gerald L. K. Smith), 79th Congress, 2d sess., 1946, H. Res. 5.

<sup>73</sup> Gerald L. K. Smith, *Satan's New Testament*, p. 25. The biblical reference is to Gen. 2:9 and 3:9.

Going further in his autobiography, Gerald L. K. Smith offers his own version of these events:

One day, [Wesley Swift] said to me: "Mr. Smith, I would like to bring my Bible up to your hotel room and talk to you." He did, and he made one of the greatest contributions to my life that any man ever made. He opened the Bible and demonstrated to me with proper texts that Christ's worst enemies were not God's chosen people. He identified the 'true Israel' which gave us the Messiah, and demonstrated to me that we were heirs to the covenant that God made with Abraham, and we were indeed Israelites. He later pointed out the text which reads, concerning those who had accepted Jesus Christ who might not be able to trace their lineage to Abraham: Ye have been circumcised by faith."

He demonstrated that the crucifiers of Christ were apostates, sons of Satan, and the seed of Cain. He proved by scriptures that Jesus Christ was not a Jew as we now know Jews, and that God is going to give His kingdom to those who have accepted Jesus Christ, and not to those who caused His crucifixion and still justify it. The modern apostates may say that if they had it to do over again, they would not nail Him to a cross; but they, in fact "crucify our Lord anew" every day.<sup>74</sup>

What follows in this text are several paragraphs of Gerald L. K. Smith's sparse prose in praise of Wesley Swift's manifold virtues, but the point is made: Swift opened the door to the Identity Kingdom to Smith, and acting as bodyguard, chauffeur and all around right hand man, the two came to be closely identified. Thus, when the Jewish community in 1950 chose to open a frontal assault on Smith and his organization, it would defy credulity that Wesley Swift--and Kingdom Identity--would not pop up squarely in their cross-hairs.<sup>75</sup>

In fact, Wesley Swift would have been hard to miss for either the AJC or the ADL, or for that matter, any casual observer of the activities of Gerald L. K. Smith. Although

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<sup>74</sup> Gerald L. K. Smith, *Besieged Patriot*, edited by Elna M. Smith and Charles F. Robinson (Eureka Springs, AK: Elma M. Smith Foundation, 1978), pp. 238-239.

<sup>75</sup> For a brief biography of Wesley Swift, see Michael Newton and Judy Ann Newton, *The Ku Klux Klan: An Encyclopedia*, p. 549.

Smith's autobiography, *Besieged Patriot*, did not appear until after his death, Smith wrote often and admiringly of Swift in his magazine, *The Cross and the Flag*. Basing his material on a 1949 issue of *The Cross and the Flag*, Ralph Lord Roy writes:

Perhaps Gerald L. K. Smith's most influential supporter is Anglo-Israelite Wesley Swift, who operates a hate enterprise costing over \$40,000 annually in the Los Angeles area. Swift has directed the activities of the Great Pyramid Club, the Anglo-Saxon Christian Congregation, and the Anglo-Saxon Bible Study Group; collectively they are said to constitute the strongest racist element on the West Coast.<sup>76</sup>

At one time Swift was Smith's chauffeur, bodyguard, and research assistant. He has remained intensely loyal to his former boss, co-operating with his program and accompanying him on many of his trips...Smith considers him "one of the great Bible students of the nation, and one of the three or four most eloquent preachers to whom I have ever listened."<sup>77</sup>

Having come to grips with Wesley Swift, and through him Christian Identity as early as the late 1940s,<sup>78</sup> the Jewish watchdog groups have never let go of the legacy of Wesley Swift. In recent years, the ADL has supplanted the AJC in its active opposition to

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<sup>76</sup> Roy somewhat underestimates Swift's zeal for organizing racist groups. In fact, Swift's name is connected with so many organizations that the researcher can't help but suspect that most of these had little more reality than a name, a post office box and somebody to pick up the mail (and perhaps someone else to drive the car, to be generous). Still, a few of these groups did have some importance. Swift's connection to the KKK, for whom Swift served as a weapons instructor, is well known. Another important movement is the still extant Christian Defense League (CDL). The CDL brought Col. William Potter Gale in contact with Swift, and would involve a number of prominent Christian Identity figures, including Richard Butler, and the current holder of the CDL organizational title, James Warner. On the Swift period of CDL activity, see William W. Turner, *Power on the Right* (Berkely, CA: Ramparts Press, 1971), pp. 101-103. Later CDL history is available from Richard Butler's perspective in "Foundations: Biography of Pastor Richard G. Butler," *Aryan Nations* (n.d.), p. 3. On Warner's CDL, see Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai Brith, *Extremism on the Right*, p. 9.

<sup>77</sup> Ralph Lord Roy, *Apostles of Discord*, pp. 103-104.

<sup>78</sup> Swift was well aware of this interest, particularly on the part of the ADL and the AJC. He is in fact quoted in an edition of his *Christian Defense News* as having formed the Christian Defense League as a counter to these and other 'enemy' organizations. William W. Turner, *Power on the Right*, p. 101.

Christian Identity, and every ADL publication touching on Identity does not fail to feature Wesley Swift prominently as "[t]he best known advocate of the 'Identity' doctrine in the United States...".<sup>79</sup> This use of Wesley Swift as the personification of Christian Identity is no accident. It is typical of the ACMs that in opposing a movement as complex and decentralized as Christian Identity, the preferred method is to hold up the most extreme manifestations of the group, a Wesley Swift or, if a living 'devil' is of greater use, a Richard Butler, and to offer this example as typical of the movement as a whole.<sup>80</sup>

This ACM effort to simplify, caricature and ultimately demonize the Identity movement is made possible by the virtual isolation of the group from the mainstream culture. The first and most vital step was the method perfected in the late 1940s and early 1950s which was described above in connection with the decisions taken by the ADL and the AJC. The news that does reach the public concerning Christian Identity is invariably colored by the ACM's 'priestly hermeneutics'.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai Brith, *The "Identity Churches": A Theology of Hate*, p. 6. To drive home this point, a one page ADL Special Edition flier again evokes the shade of Swift, who died in 1970, publishing an unattributed quote which has become ubiquitous in coverage of Swift: "I Prophesy that before November 1953 there will not be a Jew in the United States, and by that I mean a Jew that will be able to walk or talk." "Religion as Bigotry: The Identity Church Movement," *Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai Brith Special Edition* (October 1991).

<sup>80</sup> How successful this effort can be may be demonstrated with the popular press fixation with Christian identity as an inherently violent, utterly irrational sect of fanatic haters. This was brought home graphically to this writer when *Time Magazine* correspondent Mike Riley requested an interview on the subject of Christian Identity. His knowledge of the movement however, did not extend beyond Richard Butler and the Dualist figure Robert Miles. Finally, in frustration at not eliciting the blanket condemnation of the movement that he had expected, Mr. Riley asked, "But isn't it a theology of hate?" The unconscious use of the title of an ADL tract as a description of Christian Identity theology demonstrates the success of the ADL in assuming the role of the 'high priest of an esoteric god' in relation to Christian Identity's public image.

<sup>81</sup> The example given in chapter II was: "A Sinister Search for Identity," *Time*, 20 October 1986, p. 74, where the most extreme aspects of the movement were reported and Leonard Zeskind of the Center for Democratic Renewal was used as an 'expert' commentator.

The Anti-Defamation League remains the preeminent source of the 'hermeneutics' of Christian Identity, but there are other late comers to the 'novitiate'. Leonard Zeskind is one such. His Center for Democratic Renewal bills itself as "the principle national clearinghouse for community-based efforts to counter hate group activity."<sup>82</sup> The Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles is currently gathering material for a project dealing with Christian Identity, while the Wiesenthal Center in Chicago extended its facilities to Elwood McQuaid, head of the intensely philo-Semitic Friends of Israel of Bellmar, New Jersey, during a visit by Mr. McQuaid to the Moody Bible Institute.<sup>83</sup>

Yet the ADL is a 'priesthood' jealous of its deities. James Aho discovered this to his dismay when the ADL, getting wind of his research into Christian Identity in Idaho, formally requested that he present himself to explain his activities.<sup>84</sup> What's more, the ADL, once fastened on a target, is tenacious in its endeavors to isolate the target movement from the mainstream culture. No better example could be given of an attempt to physically isolate a perceived enemy than the 1969 effort by the ADL to prevent the building of a road at public expense linking an ageing Gerald L. K. Smith's biblical theme park and annual passion play in Eureka Springs, Arkansas, with the main highway.<sup>85</sup> Using tactics perfected in the 1950s, the ADL acted along two tracks: a somewhat covert press campaign which attempted to influence local and national newspapers to halt the road building effort,

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<sup>82</sup> Leonard Zeskind, *The "Christian Identity" Movement*, p. 52.

<sup>83</sup> Telephone conversation with members of the research department of the Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles, 5 May 1992. Letter from Elwood McQuaid, 3 March 1992. Cf. Elwood McQuaid, "Peril of the Christian Identity Movement," unpublished, privately circulated essay.

<sup>84</sup> James Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness*, p. 29.

<sup>85</sup> Smith died on 15 April 1976, but the *Cross and the Flag* went on briefly, as did the dream of a biblical theme park and passion play at Eureka Springs. See *The Cross and the Flag* 36 (September 1977), p. 13, for an advertisement for the park and p. 23 for a discussion of the project. For a scholarly view, see Glen Jeansonne, *Gerald L. K. Smith: Minister of Hate* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), ch. 11.

and a high profile campaign headed by ADL National Chairman Don Schary to appeal to high government officials to intervene. Included in this latter campaign were President Richard Nixon, Secretary of Commerce Maurice Stans and Secretary of Transportation John Volpe.<sup>86</sup> Smith's theme park did in the end get its road, but not before the ADL set out to punish any individual or company having any connection with the project.<sup>87</sup>

Nor are the attentions of the ADL lavished solely on high profile figures such as Gerald Smith. Pastor Dave Barley, the heir to pastor Sheldon Emry's Heirs of the Promise Ministry has appeared before in these pages with his efforts to oppose the appeal to violence made by Identity supporters of the *Vigilantes of Christendom* concept,<sup>88</sup> and as an illustration of Identity pastors seeking innovative ways to reach a wider audience with the Kingdom message--in this case through satellite television broadcasts. In a press campaign in which local newspapers quote the ADL as a source for their condemnation of Barley's church--and of the wider Identity movement--as violent white supremacists similar to Richard Butler's Aryan Nations, an attempt is made to halt the broadcasts before they began.<sup>89</sup> From Pastor Barley's point of view, the sudden surge of negative press is a carbon copy of the local media coverage which arose when he moved the Heirs of the

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<sup>86</sup> Arnold Forster and Benjamin R. Epstein, *The New Anti-Semitism* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974), p. 29.

<sup>87</sup> The Humble Oil Company for example, which publicized the passion play in a list of outdoor dramas printed in its *Happy Motoring News* newsletter, found its correspondence with the ADL leaked to the press and some credit card holders returned their cards. *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45.

<sup>88</sup> See my review essay on the impact of this text on the millenarian right wing in America in, *Syzygy: A Journal of Alternative Religion and Culture* 1 (Summer 1992), pp. 271-273.

<sup>89</sup> "A Predictable Event Has Occured!" *America's Promise Newsletter* (March 1992), pp. 21-24. Included are reprints of the articles from local newspapers in and around Sand Point, Idaho.

Promise ministry from Arizona to Idaho in 1991.<sup>90</sup> Again, the ADL effort failed to derail the broadcasts.

ADL campaigns have not been as uniformly unsuccessful as the two examples posited above would appear to indicate. The ADL has proved somewhat ineffectual on the local level--especially when the organization and its allies call on an economically strapped local community to sacrifice jobs for principle (as defined by the ADL) as in Eureka Springs or seeks to arouse local citizens to oppose the actions of Identity groups which do not seem threatening, as in the satellite television controversy in Sand Point. However, the ADL and similar anti-cult groups opposing the right wing can point to successes on two levels.

The first success is primarily psychological, and like success in almost any endeavor, it carries as a price some fascinating implications. What the ADL has managed to do most successfully is to convince Identity adherents of the proposition that the ADL, and the Jewish power behind it, is a ubiquitous fact of their lives. This perception can be seen in the oft-told jokes that conferences such as the annual Aryan Nations jamboree and hootenanny at Hayden Lake, Idaho, is peopled in equal parts by those controlled by the FBI, by the ADL and by Richard Butler's followers. Of the three, the latter group should apply for endangered species protection, given the pressure which they find themselves under to act as agents for the either 'watchdog' group. It can be heard too in the elevation of the ADL to a point where they stand for an all powerful and utterly malignant deity who in reality is the master of this earth. The examples which could be offered here are legion, so ubiquitous is this perception in the Identity literature and in conversation with Identity adherents. Thus, two brief examples will suffice.

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<sup>90</sup> This initial period is recalled by a local journalist, David Keyes, "Questions Surround Church," *Bonner County Daily Bee* (n.d.), in *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.

The events which took place near Naples, Idaho, on 21-22 August 1992, and which culminated an eighteen month siege of the cabin of Identity adherent Randy Weaver, ended with the deaths of a federal marshall, Weaver's 14 year old son and his wife--shot in the cabin while holding her infant daughter in her arms--electrified the world of Christian Identity. By chance, this drama was played out during the 22-28 August Scriptures for America Bible Camp conducted in Colorado by Identity firebrand Pete Peters. In an anguished--and outraged--message, pastor Peters defiantly states his belief that the audience of his men only meeting to discuss the situation is heavily infiltrated by the ADL, and he challenges them to report back to their masters his angry and violent, words.<sup>91</sup>

In a second, far less dramatic example, during a particularly difficult period in the course of this research, pastor Dan Gayman, enraged about the wording of a passage of a draft of an article written for the *Journal of Terrorism and Political Violence*,<sup>92</sup> condemned the entire project as proving that the ADL had succeeded in poisoning the minds of the American public against the Identity message. That letter is worth quoting here, for it reveals better the corrosive effect of the ACM activities on open discourse than any learned academic analyst could hope to construct:

...Jeffrey, from my perspective here is where I find your presuppositions to be faulty. If I have perceived something that is not true I would surely stand corrected. In all sincerity here is where I perceive you to be in your paper.

You have already established a "mindset" that the Church of Israel was an alien, foreign, un-American blot that did not belong in

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<sup>91</sup> "Special Message and Alert from Pastor Peters," Scriptures for America cassette #552 (n.d.). In an accompanying document, pastor Peters demands to know why the ADL was uncharacteristically silent on the Weaver situation. Pete Peters, "White Crime in America," *Special Newsletter*, Laporte, Colorado (n.d.), p. 1. For a less impassioned recitation of events as seen from the vantage of the Scriptures for America camp by another speaker, Identity pastor James W. Bruggerman of Asheville, North Carolina, see James W. Bruggerman, "The Stones of August," *Kingdom Chronicle* 7 (September/October 1992), pp. 1-6.

<sup>92</sup> Jeffrey Kaplan, "The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel."



the democratic process called America. Your manuscript only confirms what all the literature from the various sources such as the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, et al, have been saying. If I read the implications of your position paper correctly the Church of Israel, though presently pursuing a peaceful coexistence with the government and mainstream America, is fully capable of exploding into a millenarian revolution at any time. Given such a possibility might it not be proper to arrest the Pastor and perhaps other Church members, and hold them for crimes that it is thought that one day they might commit? While the above may seem to over accent the issue, I must be honest when I say that the impression that I get from your paper, is that the Church of Israel if not today, may at any given time, represent a very definite threat to the peace and security of other Americans?<sup>93</sup>

That the article actually implied no such thing is not to criticize pastor Gayman's reading of the text. Rather, as with the intrepid *Time* reporter noted above, the success of the ACMs in severing direct contact between the millenarian adherents of Christian Identity and the larger public, and, as a function of their 'priesthood', to provide both Identity and the dominant culture with the 'correct' images of one another, is a measure of the considerable success of the ADL and others in their self-appointed mission.

The second success of the ADL and its imitators has been in the legislative arena. These initiatives have been covered elsewhere in greater depth, so suffice to say here that the ADL model statute forbidding paramilitary activity at the Identity and survivalist camps has made these affairs a great deal less attractive to participants, while the ADL sponsored model hate crime legislation, although under a considerable constitutional cloud, has passed in many states.<sup>94</sup>

Yet the successes of the ADL point up the single fundamental difference which separates the ADL from the evangelical Christian ACMs: despite the considerably greater

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<sup>93</sup> Undated letter from pastor Dan Gayman.

<sup>94</sup> The ADL model statute is published in Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, *Hate Groups In America*, p. 54. On ADL involvement with "hate Crimes" legislation, see Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, *Hate Crimes Statutes: A 1991 Status Report*. Cf. Jeffrey Kaplan, "The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel."

resources and political support enjoyed by the ADL than are commanded by the evangelical ACMs, there appears to be little real appetite among the Jewish organizations to do away with the target movements entirely, while for the evangelicals, there could be no dearer wish than for the 'cults' to disappear from the face of the earth. That this seeming ADL ambivalence is nowhere to be seen in the evangelical anti-cult movement may be attributed to the evangelical perception that their battle is unambiguously directed at the devil as the ultimate inspiration behind the proliferation of cults, and against whom, given the teleological nature of history, the believers' best efforts are in the short run doomed to failure.<sup>95</sup> The Jewish ACMs are far more secular and thus tend to see the situation in less manichaeian terms. Of greater import, the Jewish ACMs appeal for support to the wider Jewish community and work as part of a matrix of Jewish organizations (service groups, charities, pro-Israel groups, civil rights groups, *ad infinitum*), many of whom are to the left of the political spectrum and insist that 'even Nazis have first amendment rights'; the precise reasoning behind a recent American Civil Liberties Union decision to intervene on behalf of a group of neo-Nazis who desired a permit to march through the heavily Jewish Chicago suburb of Skokie several years ago. Thus, while opposition to the activities of Identity adherents is desirable, to silence them completely would drive a wedge between the Jewish groups and their liberal supporters which would outweigh the potential benefits of an all out offensive against the target groups.

Thus, the ADL and other Jewish ACMs appear to have as their primary tactical objective the harassment and disruption of the movement, and as a strategic objective the marginalization of the groups and the isolation of their adherents from the mainstream of American culture. This they have done with considerable success, and in the process have positioned the ACMs, in the central metaphor of this section, as the high priests of a dangerous god for whose relative quiescence the priesthood may take a large measure of

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<sup>95</sup> J. Gordon Melton, *Encyclopedic Handbook of Cults*, p. 224.

public credit. In the process of course, the status of the priesthood has been raised considerably--indeed, to a point roughly commensurate to the perceived threat which the Identity and other groups are believed (by the ADL) to present.

Yet, objectively speaking, how great is that threat? In terms of numbers, the movement is rather negligible. While no reliable statistics exist for Christian Identity for example, this research has been unable to turn up evidence of more than a few thousand world wide, and as these pages have demonstrated, those committed to violence are a tiny minority of an already insignificant remnant. Other right wing groups show the same trend of declining membership. Even the Ku Klux Klan, the long time barometer of racist right wing activity in the U. S. is at an all time low according to the ADL's own figures.<sup>96</sup> Hate crimes conversely are on the increase, including those which are directed at Jews,<sup>97</sup> but these seem to be attributable to causes other than organized anti-Semitic movements as even the skinhead attacks on Jews have been on the decline.<sup>98</sup>

Just as it remains in the interest of the ADL and similar organizations to maintain the public impression that the target groups do represent a threat, so too is it in the interest of the target groups to maintain the image of the ADL as an all-powerful foe, ruthlessly dedicated to the persecution and destruction of the last 'righteous remnant' of God's chosen people. For Christian Identity, there is no more natural perception of the contemporary United States than the highly manichaeian view of a cabal of conspiratorial Jews spearheaded by the ADL and their governmental allies seeking to manipulate American political life, siphon American wealth to Israel, corrupt the churches from true Christianity

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<sup>96</sup> Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, *The KKK Today: A 1991 Status Report* (New York: ADL, 1991), p. 1. The ADL concludes that while the 1991 report indicates that the annual decline of KKK membership has stabilized, "there is little prospect of the hooded order becoming once again a significant force in the land." (p. 21)

<sup>97</sup> Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, *1991 Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents* (New York: ADL, 1992), p. 3.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

to the dreaded syncretism of Judeo-Christianity, and of course, to relentlessly persecute the faithful remnant. Is such a scenario not an authentically biblical description of the Last Days? And is there not sufficient evidence to be found in the mass media to justify such a conclusion?<sup>99</sup>

Thus, to an audience already convinced of the truth of Jewish control (witness the popularity of the epithet ZOG or Zionist Occupation Government), the very public successes of the ACMs tend to reinforce the views of the faithful, and make it all the more difficult for wavering Identity adherents to question the received wisdom of the far right wing. Indeed, it is arguably a measure of the success of the ADL and its allies in isolating the target movement and publicizing only its most extreme tendencies which may be responsible for attracting the most extreme elements in American society to the movements in the first place. Witness in this respect the emphasis put on prison ministries by the most radical Identity figures.

Clearly, the case of Christian Identity and the anti-cult movement which has become attached to it in the form of the Anti-Defamation League, the American Jewish Committee, and the newer groups such as the Center for Democratic Renewal and Klanwatch, demonstrates in graphic terms the extent to which 'cult' and 'counter-cult' can together

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<sup>99</sup> It will be recalled that in the discussion of the B'nai Noah-Identity conflict, the tendency of Identity adherents to utilize a method of selective retrieval from Jewish texts so as to form a matrix of beliefs about Jewish perfidy was noted, as was the habit of these adherents to purposefully scan the mass media for further evidence to support this matrix of beliefs. For the best example of such a matrix, see Elizabeth Dilling, *The Jewish Religion*. No better media evidence of the truth of Dilling's assertions could be posited than the recent highly public problems at AIPAC (American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee) in which its president, David Steiner, was taped making assertions of having planted agents in the presidential campaign of Bill Clinton and having cut secret deals with James Baker of the George Bush White House. It is a scenario of the anti-Semitic texts from the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* right down to Elizabeth Dilling come to life. "Pro-Israel Lobbyist Resigns After Boasts Are Made Public," *New York Times*, 5 November 1992; "A Pro-Israel Lobby Gives Itself a Headache," *New York Times Week in Review*, 8 November 1992. Further, the FOIA request which obtained the FBI document noted above for the LaRouche organization could only offer further proof to the initiated--and convincing evidence to the fence sitters--of the assertion that the epithet ZOG (Zionist Occupation Government) accurately describes today's America.

form a complex symbiosis in which each protagonist comes to not merely depend on the other for its very survival, but in fact appears to fulfill the most dire constructions the one has formed of the other. Save for the discussion of the evangelical ACMs and their construction of multigenerational Satanism which closes this chapter, no clearer example of the 'cult/anti-cult' symbiosis can be posited than the strange case of Christian Identity and its most committed organized foes.

### B'nai Noah

Despite criticism suggesting that the B'nai Noah in some way constitute a cult movement,<sup>100</sup> no organized ACM group has yet appeared to oppose B'nai Noah activities.<sup>101</sup> Indeed, only the Christian Identity movement has shown any interest in forming such an opposition, and for several reasons, the possibility of Identity adherents founding a true anti-cult organization is almost negligible. A good deal of the current immunity from ACM opposition enjoyed by the B'nai Noah may reliably be posited to be a function of their sudden appearance in 1991.<sup>102</sup> There has simply been insufficient time for them to make many enemies. However, it is entirely possible, in fact, it is probable,

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<sup>100</sup> See the early B'nai Noah response to the cult charge in *What is the B'nai Noah?*, pp. 4-5. The suspicion that the B'nai Noah do somehow constitute a cult persists and may be a factor in limiting the movement's growth. Anecdotal evidence of this abounds, although hard data is impossible to obtain. As an example, this writer received a call from a potential Noahide who, having read the B'nai Noah literature, was immensely excited and wished to join immediately. After a period of reconsideration of some weeks however, this potential adherent decided against any further contact with the group, suspecting that it was somehow a cult group. This impression seems to be a function of both the widespread misunderstanding of what actually constitutes a cult, and the common belief, fostered by many religious ACMs, that any New Religious Movement is in reality a cult.

<sup>101</sup> Neither a Christian cult awareness group nor the ADL has ever contacted the group's leader, David Davis. Conversation with J. David Davis, 7 January 1993.

<sup>102</sup> The B'nai Noah did not reach the attention of the American public until the publication of the article on David Davis in the *Wall Street Journal*: "Tennessee Baptists Turn to Judaism for New Inspiration," *Wall Street Journal* 20 March 1991.

that the ideology and the organizational structure of the B'nai Noah will insure that this freedom from ACM attention will continue.

On an ideological level, the core message of the B'nai Noah is unquestionably incendiary: the denial of the divinity of Jesus, the Christianity equals idolatry polemic, and the embrace of the Jews as teachers and guides under the theory of covenant plurality. Yet the B'nai Noah have emerged at a time of unprecedented Jewish-Christian accord in America, a time which gives at long last a dimension of real meaning to the oft-quoted but seldom defined description of American culture as Judeo-Christian.<sup>103</sup> Of greater import, perhaps for reasons dwelling more on eschatology than ethics, no sector of the American Christian community has been more militantly philo-Semitic and pro-Israel than have the evangelical and fundamentalist churches.<sup>104</sup> As an attack on the B'nai Noah would surely risk being interpreted as an attack on the movement's Jewish sponsors and supporters, it is unlikely that any such opposition may be anticipated from this sector of Christianity. The evangelical and fundamentalist churches are, after all, the backbone of the religious anti-cult movement, and without the involvement of their adherents, the B'nai Noah appear to have little to fear from that quarter.

The organizational structure of the B'nai Noah further mitigates against a serious risk of the movement being anathemized as a cult. Save for its southern epicenter, the movement is geographically diffuse and very loosely organized. There quite literally exists no machinery of central control by which David Davis or the core group of rabbinical teachers around him could exert effective influence, even if they were so inclined. The

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<sup>103</sup> This phenomenon has spawned a considerable body of literature. For one of the better examples of this genre, see Marvin R. Wilson, *Our Father Abraham: Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1989).

<sup>104</sup> See for example, the work of Chuck Smith and Hal Lindsey. Chuck Smith, *The Soon to be Revealed Antichrist* (Costa Mesa, Ca.: Marantha Evangelical Association, 1976); Chuck Smith, *A History of Calvary Chapel* (Costa Mesa, Ca.: Word for Today, 1981); Hal Lindsey, *The Road To Holocaust* (New York: Bantam, 1989); and Hal Lindsey with C. C. Carlson, *The Late Great Planet Earth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondravan, 1970).

rabbis at the center of the movement, Manachem Burstin, Yehoshua Friedman, Yoel Schwartz, Israel Chait and Michael Katz to name a few, are scattered between Israel, New York and Atlanta, Georgia. Satellite groups of B'nai Noah are spread throughout the country, indeed, throughout the world, and they tend to stay in touch with the Athens, Tennessee, center only fitfully through occasional letters and phone calls, and of course, the annual conference held in Athens which links the B'nai Noah with their Jewish mentors from throughout the world.<sup>105</sup>

Adding to the factor of geographic diffusion is the rudimentary state of B'nai Noah creed and dogma. Beyond belief in the seven Noahide commandments, there is as yet little in the way of central doctrine to unite the movement. This lack of spiritual guidance from the center<sup>106</sup> serves to further accentuate the influence of local rabbinical teachers engaged in instructing the Noahide groups. Lacking a manual of instruction, or even a shared conception of what a Noahide should know or do, these local teachers are free to emphasize whatever aspect of Judaism they deem appropriate to their gentile flock. Ironically, it may be the very visible presence of these local rabbis which best serves to insulate the B'nai Noah from accusations of cultism, for these rabbis are invested with an institutional charisma which the dominant culture recognizes as legitimate.<sup>107</sup> The central role played by local Orthodox rabbis virtually insures that no single charismatic leader will

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<sup>105</sup> Interview with Doug Taylor, 11 November 1992. Doug Taylor is a B'nai Noah adherent from Seattle who is a member of a local group of four Noahides studying under a local rabbi.

<sup>106</sup> According to David Davis, even this limited support from the center is going to be reduced in the immediate future. Davis feels that his time would be better spent writing and touring colleges and universities than serving, as he currently does, as the primary focus of the national B'nai Noah 'organization' (in as much as the movement can be called organized). Conversation with David Davis, 29 October 1992.

<sup>107</sup> For a still unparalleled discussion of the development of 'priestly charisma' in Judaism, see Max Weber, *Ancient Judaism* (New York: Free Press, 1952).

come to be seen as dominating the lives of a particular Noahide group, making the epithet 'cultist' unlikely to stick to the movement.

While the B'nai Noah is still too young to have drawn the attention of the more secular ACMs, the longer term outlook here is not as clear as it appears to be with reference to the religious ACMs. Since conversion to Noahidism does not, for most adherents, entail any dramatic break from their pre-conversion routine (no one quits their job, changes their style of dress, leaves their family, etc.), it is unlikely that the sort of ACMs composed of the relatives of new converts which are often the first stage of ACM formation in response to the emergence of New Religious Movements will arise to challenge the B'nai Noah. In a striking irony, if a secular ACM is to take up the case of the B'nai Noah, it is likely to emerge from Jewish rather than Christian sources. Should such an event occur--and it is unlikely at present--it will be the result of the B'nai Noah's alignment with several of the most extreme constituents of the Israeli radical right: the Temple Mount movement and, if R. Michael Katz's council prevails, with the settlement movement as well.<sup>108</sup> Should the B'nai Noah become too closely identified in the Jewish world with the Third Temple Movement or with Gush Emunim, it is rather to be expected that they will find themselves enmeshed in the intense inter-Jewish polemic surrounding these groups. Indeed, in this respect, the B'nai Noah may well have dodged the bullet that R. Meir Kahane failed to avoid when B'nai Noah co-founder Vendyl Jones' connection with Kahane was severed by his 5 November 1990 assassination.<sup>109</sup> Even the ADL felt constrained to bring its influence to bear against the late rabbi.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> The details of this flirtation have been offered elsewhere in these pages. For the best examination of the Israeli radical right wing, see Ehud Sprinzak, *The Ascendancy of Israel's Radical Right*.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., p. 250. On Kahane's connection with the B'nai Noah, see Vendyl Jones, "A Prince Has Fallen in Israel," p. 6. Cf. Rabbi Stewart Weiss, "A Great Man Among Our People Is Dead," p. 7.

<sup>110</sup> Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, *Meir Kahane: In His Own Words* (New York: ADL, 1985).



This leaves as a potential anti-B'nai Noah ACM only that most unlikely of candidates, Christian Identity, itself hounded tirelessly by the ADL! How this B'nai Noah/Christian Identity embrace came about is detailed in wearisome detail elsewhere in this dissertation. Suffice here to offer an update, arguing in the process the unsuitability of the adherents of Identity Christianity for the role of 'anti-cult watchdog'. It will be recalled that in the aftermath of the *Wall Street Journal* article, an immediate *alarum* went up throughout the world of Kingdom believers, warning that here was final proof that the End was nigh, that the Great Apostasy was upon us, and that the vile machinations of those who would give life to the syncretic psuedo-religion of Judeo-Christianity had at last come to fruition. Out of that sudden excitement in the Identity world emerged a single figure, pastor Paul Hall of Midpines, California, the publisher of the influential Identity newspaper *Jubilee*, who appeared to have the interest and wherewithal to carry through in forming a center of opposition to the B'nai Noah. This could well have been the birth of an authentic anti-B'nai Noah ACM, but it was not to be.

Pastor Hall started well enough. He was the sole Identity figure to continue to follow the progress of the U. S. Congress' genuflection to the Lubavitcher Reb Manachem Schneerson through the vehicle of the second Education Day Resolution, Public Law 102-268--April 13, 1992; a resolution which differed from its 1991 predecessor solely in its correction of the Reb's birth date from 22 March to 14 April.<sup>111</sup> Pastor Hall had even bought *The Path of the Righteous Gentile* to guide his study of the Noahide Laws.<sup>112</sup> Yet despite promises to follow up on the B'nai Noah movement and the wider Noahide

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<sup>111</sup> Paul Hall, "Noahide Laws Part Three: A Continued Look at Talmudic Laws Foisted Upon America," *Jubilee* (May/June 1992), pp. 10-11. For the text of the first Education Day Resolution, see *The Root and Branch Noahide Guide/1991-5752*, p. 56.

<sup>112</sup> Paul Hall, "Noahide Laws Part Three: A Continued Look at Talmudic Laws Foisted Upon America." Cf. Chaim Clorfene and Yakov Rogalski, *The Path of the Righteous Gentile* (Jerusalem: Targum Press, 1987).

controversy, pastor Hall has at this writing yet to make good on this vow. Why this should be speaks to the heart of the unsuitability of Identity leaders, and indeed of the far right wing as a whole, to create an ACM. Quite simply, they are equipped neither temperamentally, nor in terms of resources, to focus exclusively on any one set of issues or groups. By the next issue of the *Jubilee*, pastor Hall's attention had been drawn to the Earth Summit in Brazil where a gathering of world leaders struck him as apocalyptic, summoning images of the anti-Christ,<sup>113</sup> while the most recent issue of *Jubilee* concentrates almost exclusively on the Randy Weaver drama in Idaho.<sup>114</sup> ACMs are simply not built on the rock of so fleeting an attention span. Nor, in the last analysis, should it be any other way. For Christian Identity is an apocalyptic, millenarian belief system. Given the incessant state of eschatological excitement prevalent in the movement, what could possibly motivate an Identity believer to undertake any long-term commitment? Particularly if that commitment is to oppose a sign of the imminence of the End: a chiliastic event which is the primary longing of every Identity Christian!

### Ásatrú/Odinism

The capture of the Order and the discovery that its leader, Robert Mathews, was an Odinist made it virtually inevitable that the same Jewish watchdog organizations that have become the most implacable opponents of Christian Identity would set their sights on the Ásatrú/Odinist community.<sup>115</sup> The precedent set by the discovery of Christian Identity

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<sup>113</sup> Paul Hall, "Earth Summit Derision," *Jubilee* (July/August 1992).

<sup>114</sup> Paul Hall, "A Lesson In Federal Tyranny," *Jubilee* (September/October 1992); Chris Temple, "Weaver, Harris Face the Death Penalty," *Jubilee* (November/December 1992), p. 1.

<sup>115</sup> It is important to reiterate in the context of this chapter the unwritten, but widely accepted, differentiation between those who profess to be Odinists and those who would identify themselves as Ásatrúers. The former tend towards a more racist orientation while the latter tend to down play or actively oppose racism in any form. It is characteristic

through the connection of Wesley Swift with Gerald L. K. Smith's Christian Crusade is simply too recent to be ignored. Thus, it can be posited with a reasonable degree of certainty that when the process of monitoring both Christian Identity and National Socialist literature inevitably turned up in the late 1980s increasing references to Odinism as a natural religion for Aryan youth who, for a variety of reasons, could not accept the biblicism of Identity, the Jewish ACMs could not help but take notice. This in fact has happened, and if past practice is any guide, it is only a matter of time before monitoring turns into action, and the attempt is made to sever the Odinist/Ásatrú community from any viable contact with the dominant culture.

Before its widespread identification with the racist right, the Ásatrú/Odinist community was treated by the fundamentalist and evangelical ACMs as a mere appendage of the wiccan and neo-pagan community. So undifferentiated is the interpretation of the neo-pagan community by the ACMs that it is no easy task to find a Christian anti-cult group which evinces any specific interest in Norse paganism. What interest there is comes largely from what this dissertation terms ACM clearinghouses, and it is clear from a survey of several of the more prominent of these groups that the racist aspects of Ásatrú/Odinism are decidedly less important than is the dogmatic belief that what is at issue is really held to be Satanism rather than anything specific to the Norse tradition itself.

To give but two examples; the Cult Awareness Network (CAN) in Chicago has little in its files regarding either Ásatrú or Odinism. CAN however, is highly decentralized, and its Texas president Sondra Chesky and vice president Jan Keith, are well aware of the Ásatrú movement. The source of this knowledge is rather remarkable, and speaks volumes of the symbiosis of cult and counter-cult in the world of ACMs. Samuel David Herren, is a

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of ACM activity that the target movement be presented to the general public in undifferentiated form. Thus, the term Odinism appears exclusively in the ACM literature. On the Identity and Odinist composition of the Order, see Richard Kelly Hoskins, *Vigilantes of Christendom*, pp. 435-442.

former teen-aged Satanist from a conservative Baptist family in the Houston area, who, having been rescued from the world of Satanism and the occult by concerned local Christian ministries, won him a scholarship to Houston Baptist University. Satanism being a subject of greater interest in Houston than the Chicago headquarters of CAN, he eventually came to the attention of the Cheskys, who sponsored several speaking engagements in local high schools.<sup>116</sup> Never able to completely eschew the world of the occult mysteries--nor to fully accept the ACM proposition that the occult is wholly the domain of the devil, Herren met Ymir Thunarsson, a member of the High Rede of the influential Ásatrú organization, the Ring of Troth, and the high ghodi ('priest' in the loosest sense of the term) of the idiosyncratic Eagles' Reaches kindred, and eventually joined both organizations; while retaining his ties with CAN!<sup>117</sup>

While Sam Heron joined Eagles' Reaches, of far greater interest is the sympathy of Jan Kieth for Ásatrú, and indeed, for the wiccan/neo-pagan movement in general.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Conversation with Sandra Chesky, 13 March 1993. On the low level of concern for Satanism in Chicago, interview with Cynthia Kisser, 17 March 1993. In fact, CAN's national office in Chicago received on average 133 calls per month on Satanism between July 1988 and July 1990, moving Kisser to write an article on the subject. The intractable--and highly polarized--nature of the debate on Satanism in America, and the fact that whatever the truth of this construction, other cult groups are a demonstrably greater problem from the ACM perspective, accounts for the low priority the issue receives in Chicago. Texas however, is something else. See Cynthia S. Kisser, "Satanism as a Social Movement," *Free Inquiry* (Winter 1992/93). Cf. the immediate riposte from Robert Hicks, "The Myth of Satanism: A Response to Cynthia Kisser," *Ibid.* On Satanism's potency in Texas, conversation with Jan Keith, 21 January 1993.

<sup>117</sup> Interview with David Heron, 6 January 1993. Heron in fact, points out that while Ms. Chesky is a fundamentalist, Ms. Keith is a pagan working with CAN to change the image of pagan traditions 'from the inside.' Interview with David Heron, 13 January 1993.

<sup>118</sup> Conversation with Jan Keith, 21 January 1993. Jan Keith in fact would appear to be well disposed to Ásatrú on the basis of her family history. She states that she is able trace her German ancestry to Hessia in 1610, and that her grandfather was a ceremonial magician whose house in Pflugerville, Texas was adorned with runes for warding and prosperity. Through him, she was taught the mythological heritage of the Germanic peoples, and today considers herself closer to polytheism than Christianity.

This has led to some internal tension in the Houston affiliate,<sup>119</sup> but as CAN is a highly decentralized organization, this is considered an entirely local affair so long as nothing untoward--or public--results from local activities.<sup>120</sup> Indeed, never having received a complaint from a distraught parent, Chicago's CAN headquarters has little in its files regarding either Ásatrú or Odinism.<sup>121</sup>

Jack Roper of the Christian Apologetics: Research and Information Service (CARIS) was more aware of Odinism (although not Ásatrú), and was kind enough to make his files available to this research. These files at first glance appeared voluminous, but on closer examination, consisted entirely of issues of Else Christensen's publication, *The Odinist*, from 1980-1983.<sup>122</sup> The focus of the ACM clearinghouses on Else Christensen and the Odinist Fellowship and the attentions of the Jewish watchdog groups may reliably be attributed to her brand of unabashed, racist Odinism. Mrs. Christensen has certainly not been without her detractors within the movement as well. This criticism has come to this research from numerous figures in the Ásatrú community who consider her and the Odinist Fellowship 'racist', no less than from other figures in the wiccan/neo-pagan

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<sup>119</sup> Conversation with Jan Keith, 21 January 1993. Conversation with Sandra Chesky, 13 March 1993.

<sup>120</sup> Conversation with Sandra Chesky, 13 March 1993. Interview with Cynthia Kisser, 17 March 1993. This decentralization is in fact CAN's primary weakness. Fundamentally the result of a dearth of funding, materials, reports, and information obtained by an affiliate often does not find its way to Chicago, leaving on occasion the center in a position of not knowing what the affiliates are doing. Of greater concern to the subject of this chapter however, is weakness of an ACM clearinghouse which is unable to create a central archives. For its part, CAN is acutely aware of this, but lacks both funds and staff to address the problem.

<sup>121</sup> Conversation with Sarah (last name withheld by request), CAN Chicago, 7 January 1993.

<sup>122</sup> Conversation with and documents from Jack Roper, 20 November 1992.

community who are of the same view.<sup>123</sup> Mrs. Christensen, for her part, strongly denies the accusations of racism, and counters with a complaint that has taken on considerable resonance among both Ásatrúers and Odinists: religious persecution and outright discrimination.<sup>124</sup> The blame for this atmosphere of alleged religious intolerance is thus far being laid at the door of the Christian community and the ACMs. These complaints have come from throughout the country, and a brief examination of these incidents demonstrates rather clearly the manichaeian analytical model by which the origins, activities, and relative level of threat presented by the Ásatrú community is being assessed.

For her part, Else Christensen complains of this form of what, in her view, constitutes religious persecution. However, this has less to do with any negative experiences of her own than it does with the experiences of the two primary constituent groups of the Odinist Fellowship. The Odinist Fellowship functions primarily as a 'mail order ministry' which enjoys very little personal contact with its adherents. Thus, the membership of the Fellowship tends to be confined either to independents around the country who do not have primary ties to either a local kindred or to one of the national Ásatrú organizations, or to prisoners from around the United States.<sup>125</sup> That either group would be by definition the victims of persecution is a dogma of the Odinist community, given the strongly negative view of Christianity held by Odinists and Ásatrúers alike, and raised to a manichaeian crescendo in the pages of *The Odinist*.<sup>126</sup> In the face of the many

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<sup>123</sup> For a good insight into the negative view of the Odinist Fellowship held by other pagans, see Margot Adler, *Drawing Down the Moon* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986), p. 278: "[The Odinist Fellowship] is frankly racist, although they would probably prefer the term 'racialist.' "

<sup>124</sup> Interview with Mrs. Else Christensen, 27 November 1992.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> See for example, "Christianity vs. Paganism," *The Odinist* 80 (1983), pp. 6-8, for a good historical overview of this perception. For the flavor of the prison ministry, see "Brotherhood," *The Odinist* 67 (1982), pp. 1-3.

forms which this persecution is thought to take, Mrs. Christensen asserts that her constant council is for patience:

When letters come in full of anger about obvious discrimination (and there is a lot!) (funny enough, the Blacks say the same!), I act as a conductor. I do not deny the problems, that would be stupid, but in some prisons I have suggested that our men get together with the Muslims to keep order on the compound and/or to negotiate with the administration; a few times it has worked

I try to get them to use logic and understand that working together is a lot more productive than fighting...<sup>127</sup>

Where Else Christensen counsels patience and preparation in the face of 'Christian persecution', Steve McNallen, founder of Ásatrú/Odinism in America through the Ásatrú Free Assembly, professes some bemusement in the irony of Christian fundamentalists attacking Ásatrúers who share certain social and political, if not religious, attitudes with American fundamentalism:

After a period of religious tolerance that has lulled us for several decades--a tolerance that has protected both the best and the worst in American behavior--it is apparent that we are entering a time when we of Ásatrú are going to meet greater and greater resistance from the powers that rule this country...[yet] Many of the values championed by those who oppress us are values with which we can readily identify, such as strengthened family, less bureaucratic intervention in the life of the individual...<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Interview with Mrs. Else Christensen, 27 November 1992. It is important to note that Odinism for Mrs. Christensen is a warrior religion and she thus holds the Christian concept of turning the other cheek in contempt. Nonetheless, extreme anti-Semitism or derogatory language "alienates those who might otherwise work with us, and...will put even more people into the jails and prisons."

<sup>128</sup> "The Jesus Flag," *The Runestone* 51 (Spring 1985), p. 11, quoted in Margot Adler, *Drawing Down the Moon*, p. 280. McNallen feels that it is important to note that the key difference "is on the matter of tolerance. I think that that most Asafolk are more tolerant than most fundamentalists, in general." Letter from Steve McNallen, 31 December 1992.

In interviews with Ásatrúers and Odinists from across the United States, the precise sources of this alleged persecution by Christian groups is difficult to pin down, but several clear patterns do emerge. Anecdotes of personal misfortunes blamed directly or indirectly on Christian ACM activity are legion. One of the better known of these involved William Bainbridge, an Arizona attorney who was forced to resign when his involvement in the pagan community became known.<sup>129</sup> Another Ásatrúer with wide ranging contacts in both the Odinist and Ásatrú camps has collected some of the more egregious of these experiences, with the most picturesque involving a woman in a town in the Southwest who, in the course of recovering from a recent divorce, joined the local Kiwanas Club, and through this association, volunteered to coach a local Girls' Scout softball team. When the local newspaper learned of her Ásatrú involvement, it printed a story falsely accusing her of demanding that a cross be removed from the public park. As a result, she was not only removed as a coach, but was all but driven from the town.<sup>130</sup>

The factor linking these and many more anecdotes of localized persecution, upon closer examination, invariably turns out not to be local fears of Ásatrú--indeed, few of the family centered ACMs active on the local level have heard of Ásatrú, and the ACM clearinghouses are not much more enlightened--but rather, the fear of Satanism for which neo-pagan traditions are but a mask. This identification was brought home in particularly graphic form when one professional occult investigator at an appearance at a local public high school projected pictures of satanic materials on a screen, and the children of an

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<sup>129</sup> Conversation with William Bainbridge, 17 January 1993. The tale is an interesting, albeit a long one. The problem illustrates the effectiveness of the ACM paganism equals Satanism scenario, in that Mr. Bainbridge's travails began with a police raid on the home of a local member of the pagan community in a futile search for human remains believed to have been used in a Satanic ceremony. As a member of the Pagan Arizona Network, Mr. Bainbridge, promised anonymity, carried a protest to a local detective. The promise was not kept, and Mr. Bainbridge's employers offered him the option of resignation or a long, and possibly public, investigation which would have effectively ended his professional career in Phoenix.

<sup>130</sup> Conversation with DjúpkverkR, 12 October 1992.



Ásatrú family noted that some of what was referred to as a 'satanic alphabet' consisted of Norse runes.<sup>131</sup>

It is interesting to note that, despite the dogmatic quality of the belief in the formula Ásatrú/Odinism=wicca/neo-paganism=satanism, no Christian ACM has, to my knowledge, looked closely enough at the Ásatrú movement to notice that one of the most divisive internal controversies to beset the community was in fact centered on the suspected presence of Satanists within Ásatrú ranks. Nor were these debates a matter of abstract theory. Rather, Edred Thorsson, then the head of the Ring of Troth and the Rune Guild, and clearly the greatest scholar in the ranks of the Ásatrú community today, in 1989 revealed himself to be a Fifth Degree Magus and the Grand Master of the Order of the Trapezoid in the Temple of Set!<sup>132</sup> More, Thorsson was, before his connection to Michael Aquino and the Temple of Set, active in Anton LaVey's Church of Satan.<sup>133</sup> This issue was been aired more fully in chapter four, but that so widely known and highly divisive an

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid. This adherent recalls other incidents in the southwest, including one in which the local sheriff arrived at his door with news of the 'ritual killing' of a dog which was found buried in a shallow grave by the roadside. The 'indisputable evidence' that the killing was connected to a satanic rite was the fact that when the dog was found, all the blood had been drained from the body. Local excitement abated however, when it was learned that the dog had been dead for some time and that the animal's blood had been lost as a result of natural processes. Confirmation of the identification of Norse runes with Satanism can be found in the unpublished notes to a slide presentation on Satanism offered by Jack Roper of CARIS. See Jack Roper, *Signs Primer: Occult Semiology Investigative Slide Training Series: Slide Script Volume One* (Milwaukee, WI: CARIS, 1991).

<sup>132</sup> The sole exception to this is the Texas CAN group whose investigator, Samuel Herren, joined the Ring of Troth which Thorsson founded. Herren did discuss Thorsson's Satanism with Jan Chesky, but noted that in a recent talk at the Houston neo-pagan bookstore and gathering place for the local occult community, the Magic Lantern, Thorsson appeared to down play the Satanism issue and CAN took no further action. Interview with Samuel Herren, 6 January 1993.

<sup>133</sup> Interview with Edred Thorsson, 20 September 1992. Despite this divisive controversy--a controversy which has yet to fully abate--Edred Thorsson remains unbowed by his current virtual pariah status in many sectors of Ásatrú/Odinist opinion. He proudly notes his initiatory degrees in both Ásatrú and the Temple of Set on his c.v., and in the interview of 20 September 1992, refers to the Temple of Set controversy in unrepentant terms: "For the most part I have treated my detractors for the ants they are (you know those crawling up the elephant's leg intent on rape)."

issue has escaped the notice of the Christian ACMs speaks volumes for the quality of research--and the degree of attention--which the Ásatrú/Odinist community has drawn in these circles.

The Jewish components of the ACM community, and particularly the Anti-Defamation League, command considerably greater research resources than do the Christian ACMs, and thus presumably not have failed to note the doings of the Ásatrú/Odinist community. In particular, they could not have failed to note the references to Odinism which, as this dissertation has pointed out in several previous contexts, have become ever more frequent in such sectors of the 'White supremacist constellation' as the Ku Klux Klan, National Socialism, and racially oriented skinheads, not to mention the competition noted previously for the allegiance of White prisoners between Christian Identity, Odinism, the Church of the Creator, and, until his recent death, Robert Miles' Mountain Church. Thus, when the Order's high profile activities were brought to an end, it took little imagination to believe that the Ásatrú/Odinist community had appeared squarely on the radar of the ADL's intrepid Research Department.

This has indeed come to pass, and the pattern closely resembles the early demonization of Christian Identity. There is the same almost accidental (or fortuitous, depending on the perspective of the observer) discovery of the movement, the same gathering of preliminary material from the publications of movements already targeted as enemies of the American Jewish community, and most telling, the same undifferentiated approach to a complex movement in which the most extreme elements are isolated, studied, and presented as 'typical' members of a dangerous and potentially violent group of right wing extremists.

The ADL, it will be recalled, represents a purely secular set of political interests, despite its sectarian base in the Jewish community. Thus, whether this or that leader is a satanist, or whether the movement is an authentic reconstruction of pre-Christian Germanic paganism or a purely modern construct of adherents seeking alternative forms of communal

identification, are questions which would evince little interest in ADL circles. Rather, the questions appear to be more elemental: are Odinists (Ásatrú does not register in this context) racist and anti-Semitic, and if so, do they represent an immediate threat to the Jewish community and a long range challenge to the state (in ADL parlance, these appear to be undifferentiated)? That the ADL is now at the point of making this determination in the affirmative, at least in so far as Odinism's identification with National Socialism is concerned, is demonstrated in a recent letter received in support of this research from Alan M. Schwartz, Director of the Research and Evaluation Department of the Anti-Defamation League. He writes:

While there may be Odinists who are not part of a neo-Nazi or other hate movement...Odinism has been a psuedo-religious strain of American neo-Nazi activity and propaganda. These neo-Nazis apparently consider the worship of Odin and other ancient Norse gods as part of their vision of "Aryan" supremacy. I enclose a piece of neo-Nazi propaganda illustrating this link.<sup>134</sup>

The neo-Nazi material to which Mr. Schwartz refers is the premier issue of the *Aryan Action Line*, a publication which both touts right wing causes (especially of the National Socialist variety) and tries to find jobs and housing for 'comrades' in unfortunate situations. The key passage of this document is worth quoting in full:

The Study of our Past Helps to Guarantee our Future  
The Odinist Fellowship publishes an excellent newsletter called The Odinist. This informative newsletter has many historical and religious facts. Our Aryan roots go further back than the birth of Jesus Christ and every member of our Movement should learn every aspect of our past. Whether you are an Identity Christian or an avowed atheist you should know how our people lived in the ancient past as well as the more recent past...<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> Letter from Alan M. Schwartz, 4 December 1992.

<sup>135</sup> *Aryan Action Line* 1 (Fall 1991), no page numbers.

At this writing, neither the ADL nor any of the smaller denominational, philanthropic or political ACM sub-groups has gone further than identifying Odinism as a neo-Nazi front group. No literature has yet been issued warning of the dangers of Odinism, and no apparent efforts have been made to get the mainstream press to focus on the movement. Certainly, the mainstream press seems to have written little specifically about Ásatrú/Odinism in America. Thus, if the expectation of this chapter is correct and the ADL/Christian Identity relationship does serve as a paradigm for the evolution of the dealings of the ADL and other secular ACMs with the Ásatrú and Odinist communities, there may yet be time to prevent the kind of vilification, and ultimate demonization, of what is in reality a numerically small, but highly diverse religious movement.

There are indeed a number of adherents of National Socialism and other far right wing racist ideologies in this community. Yet it is also true that there a number of adherents who abhor this racist trend and bend every effort possible to purge the movement of this racist element. In the middle there appears to be a considerable group--perhaps a majority according to this research--who simply wish the issue would go away, and could in no way be themselves described as racist in any meaningful sense of the term.<sup>136</sup> Indeed, it would be no exaggeration to re-emphasize the assertion of an earlier chapter that there has been for the last several years a veritable civil war within Ásatrú/Odinist circles for the soul of the movement. Whether in the end the racist or the non-racist adherents of the movement ultimately inherit control of the further development of the tradition is as yet impossible to know. More, it would be impermissible in the context of this dissertation to abandon the spirit of strict neutrality and to thus give even the appearance of favoring one side over the other. Yet based on a

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<sup>136</sup> This middle choice is being increasingly challenged by the non-racist adherents. See the latest issue of the influential, independent Ásatrú journal, *Mountain Thunder*, [*Mountain Thunder* 8 (Spring Equinox 1993)] for several articles on the topic. Cf. the premier issue of the Ásatrú Fellowship's journal, *Ask and Embla* for writings on this theme.

reading of recent history, this much can be said with some certainty: should the racist adherents of the community achieve predominance--and given their superior organization and, often, greater motivation this remains a distinct possibility--the movement can, like Christian Identity before it, look forward to a future of angry isolation. They will be, quite simply, severed from effective contact with the dominant cultural community, and will be left talking largely to themselves, and of course, to their most devoted audience, the high priesthood of the ADL and its sister ACM acolytes. Steve McNallen, the founder of the American Ásatrú movement, notes this danger as well, suggesting in the process that the scenario of ACM activity as outlined above may very well come to pass in the form of, ironically enough, a self-fulfilling prophesy:

If watchdog organizations try to stigmatize all Asafolk or Odinists as haters or paramilitary types, they will hurt the very people within the movement who are a force for moderation. Reasonable individuals will be repelled, and the extremists will be attracted to what they perceive as like-minded folks. These groups--the watchdogs--will have created the very enemy they feared.<sup>137</sup>

### Gush Emunim

Gush Emunim bears more than a family resemblance to the American groups who are the focus of the earlier chapters of this dissertation. The Gush is, despite its primarily fundamentalist orientation, a messianic belief system, animated by the certainty that the world has entered a new historical epoch which melds sacred and secular history into a chiliastic vision of universal redemption. Core Gush theorists have given much thought to past golden age scenarios, and have found in inerrant text an immutable blueprint providing a highly developed theodicy as well as a vision for a comprehensive system of post-historical ethics, morality and law. At its best, Gush Emunim offers a simple, historically

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<sup>137</sup> Interview with Steve McNallen, 4 January 1993.

resonant vision to a nation--and a people--for whom the central dogmas which since 1948 have guaranteed the success of the nation building process have been called into question, leading many Israelis to the inescapable conclusion that Zionism in its many forms is dying, if not already dead.<sup>138</sup> At its worst, elements of the Gush have devolved into vigilante violence and, more to the point, messianic violence.<sup>139</sup> In all of this and much more, Gush Emunim shares much in common with Christian Identity, the B'nai Noah and the Ásatrú/Odinist community. Yet the Gush is alone in not having drawn upon itself the attentions of an anti-cult group matching the description of any of the four types posited in this chapter. Why this should be is an interesting line of conjecture, and what follows is at best speculative. Yet there must be some way to account for this divergence, and it would appear that the most profitable avenues of investigation would center on the very different religious and political environment of Israel, and on the recognition of the movement's religious legitimacy.

Structurally, the Israeli state adopted from the Turkish empire a form of the *millet* system by which the state would recognize a religious community, provide it with funds, and licence its officials to perform set functions, usually centered around the ceremonial

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<sup>138</sup> Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi, "Judaism and the New Religions in Israel: 1970:1990," p. 219. This assertion, gathered from discussions with a number of Israeli intellectuals from across the ideological spectrum, may be the functional equivalent of the God is dead "theology" of the 1960s. It may be as well, however, more a function of the ideological ferment which took root in the 1960s, but is only at this writing reaching its fruition with the collapse of Soviet communism and the current, violent, global restructuring. See for example, "Zionism On The Defensive," *Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 8 August 1987; "Centre And Periphery," *Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 17 October 1987; "The 31st Zionist Congress Supplement," special section, *Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 12 December 1987; "Damage-Control Zionism," *Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 26 December 1987; Avraham Infeld, "What is 'Zionism'?" *The Jerusalem Post Magazine*, Independence Day Edition, 20 May 1988; Uriel Tal, "Historical and Metahistorical Self-Views in Religious Zionism," *Religious Zionism: Challenge and Choices* 1 (Oz VeShalom Publications, n.d.); Norman L. Zucker, *The Coming Crisis in Israel: Private Faith and Public Policy*; and Gideon Aran, "From Religious Zionism to Zionist Religion: The Roots of Gush Emunim."

<sup>139</sup> David Rappoport, "Messianic Sanctions for Terror."

aspects of the life passages of the members of that community.<sup>140</sup> The withholding of recognition, or its withdrawal once given, is thus a threat of some consequence in the Israeli polity. In theory then, Israel would appear to be something of a rigid, semi-theocratic state based closely on the model of the Sunni Islamic polity in which a number of confessional groups are permitted, despite certain citizenship disabilities, to reside in semi-autonomous communities, albeit that these faith communities remained at all times under the ultimate jurisdiction of the state and its religious authorities.<sup>141</sup> Yet while the argument could be made that to a limited degree this does describe the historical relationship between the Israeli Jewish and Israeli Arab communities, in practice, the Israeli religious scene is considerably more pluralistic--and free from overt state control--than the legal structures of the state would suggest.

For the New Religious Movements which were imported into Israel in the 1970s and 1980s,<sup>142</sup> this relative religious space has meant a proselyting environment which was

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<sup>140</sup> Nurit Zaidman-Dvir and Stephen Sharot, "The Response of Israeli Society to New Religious Movements: ISKCON and Teshuva," p. 284-285. It should be noted that the Turkish *millet* system was a method of decentralized governance of provinces aimed at keeping relative peace and a minimum degree of cohesion within the empire, although at the cost of a substantial degree of local autonomy. As the empire's power weakened in proportion to the distance of a particular *millet* from a center of imperial power, this autonomy often took the form of virtual secession. The Israeli use of the system, applied in a vastly more geographically compact area, seems to have the opposite aim: to assure that through the allocation of recognition and resources, the Chief Rabbinate, and the state itself, is able to promote the centralization of religious authority.

<sup>141</sup> Ira M Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*.

<sup>142</sup> The most expansive listing of these groups from ACM sources lists ten categories of NRMs active in Israel. The list is interesting more for how many Israelis define 'new religions,' as well as for its apparent taxonomic system which seems to group NRMs according to traditional Jewish sensitivities, than for any reliable insight into the Israeli religious scene. It includes: "1) Neo-Christian, evangelist movements; 2) Hindu and Eastern Religion based--Hare Krishna and Transcendental Meditation; 3) Occult based; 4) Satanic and Witchcraft based; 5) Zen based; 6) Race based; 7) Flying Saucer Based; 8) Psychologically based--EST, Scientology; 9) Spiritualistically based--E-MIN; and 10) Politically based." Francis Yoeli, "The Cult of Awareness," *Jerusalem Post Israeli Edition*, 15 March 1987. Unfortunately, Yoeli does not define these categories, nor does he explain, for instance, how Zen rates an independent category rather than being placed as a sub-set of Eastern religions, or how Satanism and witchcraft should be grouped together rather than as sub-sets of Occult groups.

relatively free from interference by the state or by the Chief Rabbinate.<sup>143</sup> This in turn, as we have seen, stimulated the creation of a family centered ACM group which soon gained considerable support in state, media and private sectors of Israeli society. Yet for all the smoke and noise, in the end, following a long governmental commission of inquiry investigation, the new religious movements remained largely unaffected.<sup>144</sup> It appears that, ultimately, these were tiny groups which presented no realistic threat of conversion away from Judaism, and no greater threat to the institutions of the state (especially military service). This low threat perception with regard to the NRMs was perhaps fortuitous in that few, if any, actually sought to register with the government for any communal recognition beyond tax relief.<sup>145</sup> This gave the state and the Chief Rabbinate a very limited arsenal with which to combat the NRMs.

While the NRMs clearly presented little threat, immediate or long range, to either the state or the rabbinical establishment, Gush Emunim has at times in its tumultuous existence directly threatened the authority and prestige of both. Gush actions at Yamit, to take but one example, brought them to blows with the state in the form of the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF), while the insistence of the rabbinate on the authority of the government to deal with the matter of the withdrawal from the Sinai was contemptuously ignored.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi, "Old Identities and New Religions in Israel," *Syzygy* 1 (Spring/Summer 1992).

<sup>144</sup> Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi, "Judaism and the New Religions in Israel: 1970:1990," pp. 213-220.

<sup>145</sup> Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi, "Old Identities and New Religions in Israel," pp. 260-261.

<sup>146</sup> Gadi Wolsfeld, "Protest and the Removal of Yamit: Ostentatious Political Action,"; Gideon Aran and Michael Feige, "The Price of Peace: The Removal of the Israeli Settlements in Sinai,"; and Erik Cohen, "The Removal of the Israeli Settlements in Sinai: An Ambiguous Resolution to an Existential Conflict."



Yet in stark contrast to the ACM opposition faced by the new religions to any action (or omission) which they might make, no ACM-like movement has set itself up as a watchdog over GE activities. Secular Jews may object to GE actions. The government may threaten key GE personalities and lower level activists, or ad-hoc groups composed of Peace Now supporters may go the Occupied Territories to demonstrate while Religious Zionists of the Oz VeShalom persuasion may write learned articles 'unmasking' the Gush as the "New Sabbatians" for dissemination in intellectual journals in both Israel and the United States. But none of this considerable opposition has coalesced into anything so single issue oriented as an ACM. The key to understanding the very different treatment accorded the imported new religions and Gush Emunim thus appears to be the widely perceived religious legitimacy of the latter movement in the context of Israeli Judaism.

This sense that Gush Emunim represents a fully legitimate, if not entirely palatable to a majority of the citizenry, strain of Israeli Judaism is inescapable. The support which the Gush has found in many sectors of the Israeli religious establishment is not merely a matter of political expediency. The core leadership of the organization are themselves ordained rabbis, some of whom, men like Eliazer Waldman, Yoel Bin-Nun, Hanan Porat, and even, arguably, Moshe Levinger, enjoy considerable religious prestige. The Gush, for all of its aura of radicalism, is widely accepted in religious circles as the most dedicated heirs to the legacy of the first Chief Rabbi of Palestine, Abraham Kook. The rabbinical core of Gush leadership studied under Rav Kook's son, Zvi Yehuda, and may well be seen in the eyes of the Chief Rabbinate as the most authentic manifestations of Rav Kook's unique religious Zionism to be found in contemporary Israel.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> On the Gush, Kookism and the rabbinical establishment, see Eliezer Don-Yehiya, "Messianic Theology and Radical Politics: Rav Kook, Father and Son, and Their Disciples." On the elder Rav Kook's teachings, see Ben Zion Bokser, trans. and ed., *Abraham Isaac Kook*. On the teachings of the younger kook, see Tzvi Yehuda HaCohen Kook, *Torat Eretz Yisrael*.

If, unlike the new religious groups in Israel, Gush Emunim's religious legitimacy is secure from attack, could the same not be said of the Heredim or Ultra-Orthodox streams of Judaism? Yet the Heredim exist in a state of constant tension with their fellow Jews,<sup>148</sup> while GE's conflicts with the Israeli Jewish community are intermittent at best. Here again it is possible to isolate an important source of GE's legitimacy: its unwavering embrace of a fervent, pioneering form of Zionism which has all but died out in the left wing kibbutz movement and is more a source of nostalgia than inspiration in the secular mainstream of Israeli society.<sup>149</sup> Nowhere is this blend of religious and Zionist commitment better exemplified than in the hesder yeshiva system with which such GE personalities as Eliezer Waldman have become identified, and in the storied heroic military deeds of such Gush stalwarts as Hanan Porat.<sup>150</sup>

With its religious flank covered by an impenetrable aura of Jewish legitimacy, it remained only for the Gush to consolidate its influence in the Israeli political arena. This it has, at least until the election defeat suffered by the Likud coalition in 1992--accomplished with considerable aplomb. This is an accomplishment of some note given the notoriously short attention span which all of the core leadership with the sole exception of Moshe Levenger seem able to expend on the tedium of the political process. In terms of parliamentary politics, Gush personalities first rose to prominence under the banner of the National Religious Party, and it is under this banner that many of the key figures of the

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<sup>148</sup> Samuel C. Heilman & Menachem Friedman, "Religious Fundamentalism and Religious Jews."

<sup>149</sup> The 'death of Zionism' argument is rehearsed above. For a good early source on the splintering and gradual weakening of the ideology, see Rael Jean Isaac, *Israel Divided*. For a later source, see D. Horowitz and M. Lissak, *Troubles in Utopia: The Overburdened Polity of Israel* (New York: SUNY Press, 1989). For a still unparalleled reader introducing the various schools of Zionism in historical context, see Arthur Hertzberg, *The Zionist Idea* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966).

<sup>150</sup> 'Settle the Land and Mend the Nation,' *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, 4 August 1976; and Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, p. 238.

Gush make their occasional peregrinations into the murky waters of Israeli party political life.<sup>151</sup> However, party politics in Israel is a poor gauge of the standing of any individual or political ideology with Israeli society as a whole.<sup>152</sup> Thus, actual support for Gush Emunim is hard to assess with any accuracy. One notable scholar of the Israeli political and religious scene posited in this regard an iceberg model in which the visible support for GE aspirations represented only the tip of the political iceberg. A far broader coalition of secular security hawks, nationalistic territorial maximalists, simple anti-Arab racialists, and a number of other small, single issue constituencies should be counted among GEs 'silent majority' of Israeli society.<sup>153</sup> How this broad coalition will hold together in the wake of the Labor Party's electoral victory remains to be seen, but it may be safely assumed that these interests will not simply disappear from the political scene.

Whatever the current balance of political forces however, there can be no question that Gush Emunim is deeply entrenched in Israeli society, and that it, in fact, enjoys considerably higher levels of support--and of religious and political legitimacy-- than do those forces who have come closest to forming an ACM-like opposition to the Gush: the disparate adherents of Peace Now and the elite intellectual adherents of Oz VeShalom. And in the context of this dissertation, it is this religio-political legitimacy which most clearly differentiates Gush Emunim and its freedom from ACM interference in the context of modern Israel, from Christian Identity, the B'nai Noah and the Ásatrú/Odinist community,

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<sup>151</sup> Stewart Reiser, *The Politics of Leverage*, Harvard Middle East Papers Modern Series, Number 2, (Cambridge: Harvard University Center for Middle Eastern Studies, 1984). For other party affiliations of GE members, see Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism"; or Geoffrey Aronson, *Creating Facts*.

<sup>152</sup> Voting in Israel is conducted according to party lists rather than direct voting for particular candidates. The lists are selected by party professionals rather than by constituents.

<sup>153</sup> Ehud Sprinzak, "Gush Emunim: The Tip of the Iceberg,"; Ehud Sprinzak, "The Iceberg Model of Political Extremism,"; and Kevin Avruch, "The Iceberg Model of Extremism Reconsidered."

each of whom has, in the context of contemporary America, drawn upon itself the unwelcome attentions of numerous ACM groups.

### Multigenerational Satanists

*[Satanic] criminal activities further focus on animal and human mutilation and sacrifice, which include the ritual murder of infants, as many as 60,000 or more each year, during black masses and related sacrificial ceremonies. Many infant victims are born to cult members, so there are no records of their births or deaths.*<sup>154</sup>

*There is no doubt in my mind that America is sliding into a period of fragmentary extremism and that the recent growth of Satanism is part of that general trend....Radical right-wing and leftist conspiratorial groups wield much unseen power in the political spectrum; extremist racial groups, odd religious sects, and bizarre sex cults flourish, meeting and planning action in homes across the country. The prevalence of witchcraft and Satanic covens are a part of the overall proclivity toward cultishness, rather than unique phenomena in themselves.* <sup>155</sup>

The panic over manifestations of Satanism in America may safely be posited as the greatest achievement of the anti-cult movement, for here as nowhere else, ACMs have succeeded in connecting with a reservoir of unspoken fears which hover very near the surface of contemporary society.<sup>156</sup> While it is clearly beyond the purview of this chapter

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<sup>154</sup> Dr. Alan H. Peterson, ed., *The American Focus on Satanic Crime Volume I* (Millburn, NJ: American Focus Publishing Co., 1988), p. III.

<sup>155</sup> Arthur Lyons, *The Second Coming: Satanism in America* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1970), pp. 147-148. Lyons offers a view that fits neatly into the Masonic/Jewish/Satanic conspiracy scenario propounded by Identity Christians and of both fundamentalists and evangelicals. Recounting an interview with a high priest over 13 covens (156 people), this individual, a multimillionaire, maintained power over his group for the chief purpose of holding and exercising power. His followers were recruited by stages, starting with offers of employment in one of his companies, while gradually building bonds of financial dependence, of fear based on files of damaging information, and ultimately by the individual's participation in illegal activities. (pp. 126-127).

<sup>156</sup> James T. Richardson, Joel Best and David Bromley, *The Satanism Scare* (New York: Aldine De Gruyter, 1991), is the best recent source on the myriad aspects of the current Satanic panic.

to attempt to trace the tortuous history of this fear, it is important to note that the manichaeian fear of the devil and his alleged dominance of the doings of this world runs deep in Western culture. More, as will be considered in somewhat greater depth below, this fear is in a sense a distillation of a great number of terrors and uncertainties, existential as well as utterly utilitarian, which brought together form a veritable Jungian archetype of pure evil. That evil has in the past been given many faces; the wandering Jew whose ritual murders of Christian children and poisoning of wells were once widely held as one contemporary mask for Satan's blind enmity, just as the conspiratorial, world devouring Jew of more recent vintage is held by many Identity adherents as a current mask of Satan. How different from this view is the satanic cult who, under the guise of the day care center, corrupts and destroys children in the service of the Dark Lord? Thus, the anti-cult movement could hardly be accused of dishonest manipulation when, in the late 1960s, many ACM groups coalesced around the battle against Satan in all his guises.

But what were these guises? Wiccan witches or nature worshipping neo-pagans? Teen-age aficionados of heavy metal music? New Agers? Or was the problem one of a vast conspiracy of satanic cults, centrally coordinated, and replenished both by the seduction of the innocent and (how historically resonant, this!), the use of women as breeders to give birth to children who, properly trained, would inherit the cult (and eventually, the world!).

What follows then, is a brief four-fold taxonomy of modern satanism as it is constructed by the anti-cult movement. This will be followed by an in depth examination of the apex of this taxonomy, the multigenerational Satanist, for it is at this level that the work of the ACM movement is observed in most graphic form. Quite simply, lacking even a shred of credible evidence for the existence of this elusive conspiratorial satanic adept, the ACMs have opted to build their construction on the pure 'stuff of dreams', that is, on the archetypal fears of pure and timeless evil to which we are all, to some degree, prey.

Finally, it should be noted that most if not all of the ACM groups noted below which are most intimately engaged in the battle against multigenerational Satanism fall into two categories of the ACM taxonomy which opened this chapter: the family centered and apostate groups (with alleged apostates playing the most important roles), and to a lesser degree, the ACM clearinghouses. Denominational groups tend to be too liberal (or more to the point, too respectable) to join the fundamentalist and evangelical crusade against Lucifer, while the political and philanthropic components of this sub-set are too secular to be attracted to such a cause. As no genuine multigenerational Satanists have yet stepped forward, the formation of mirror image ACMs would appear somewhat premature.

In recent years, something of a cottage industry has appeared in taxonomies of Satanism, with observers from a wide variety of perspectives seeking to differentiate between the most casual teen-age dabbler in the black arts and the elusive figure of the conspiratorial satanist. What is remarkable to the consumer of these texts is that, despite the vast gulf separating fundamentalist and anti-cult theorists from those in the academic and law enforcement communities (whose work tends to debunk the claims of the former group), the actual taxonomic systems posited from all sectors of this literature tend to be remarkably similar, suggesting between three and five levels of satanic involvement. The system chosen for this section is a four tiered taxonomy suggested by Robert D. Hicks.<sup>157</sup> This system, borrowed from the police model of satanic involvement, is in fact a distillation of the taxonomies offered in the anti-cult literature which entered the world of the 'occult

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<sup>157</sup> The four levels of Satanic involvement stem from the taxonomy offered by Robert D. Hicks, "The Police Model of Satanic Crime," in James T. Richardson, Joel Best and David Bromley, *The Satanism Scare*, pp. 178-181. Hicks has published copiously on questions of the occult and law enforcement, invariably seeking to debunk claims of the anti-cult and fundamentalist groups regarding the alleged crimes of the ubiquitous Satanist in American society. Cf. Robert D. Hicks, *In Pursuit of Satan: The Police and the Occult*; Robert D. Hicks, "Police Pursuit of Satanic Crime, Part I," *Skeptical Inquirer* 14 (Spring 1990), pp. 276-286; and Robert D. Hicks, "Police Pursuit of Satanic Crime, Part II: The Satanic Conspiracy and Urban Legends," *Skeptical Inquirer* 14 (Summer 1990), pp. 378-389.

cops' via seminars offered by ACM clearinghouses. It is important to note however, that there are a number of alternate taxonomies which could have been utilized as easily.<sup>158</sup>

Hicks presents four levels of satanic involvement: dabblers, self-styled killers, organized churches, and multigenerational adherents. Dabblers are simply young people, usually teen-aged boys, interested in rock music with occult or satanic themes, occult games such as the popular role playing game *Dungeons & Dragons*, and often exhibiting a marked fondness for drugs--especially of the hallucinogenic variety. Self-styled killers are killers who claim satanism as a motive for their crimes. These claims may come before or after capture. Examples often posited of these are Charles Manson, Henry Lee Lucas, Richard Ramirez (the Nightstalker), and Sean Sellers. Organized churches are the legal, tax exempt, 'tip of the satanic iceberg'. The most notable of these are Anton LaVey's Church of Satan and Michael Aquino's Temple of Set.<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> A brief review of some of these taxonomies should be noted. FBI Special Agent Ken Lanning suggests a three-tiered system; youth subculture, dabblers and traditional or multigenerational. Kenneth V. Lanning, "Satanic, Occult, Ritualistic Crime: A Law Enforcement Perspective," document from the National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime, FBI Academy, Quantico, Virginia (October 1989), pp. 10-11. Another law enforcement perspective is offered by Kristal Leebrick, "Devil Worship in the Land of Lakes," *Minnesota Police Chief* 9 (September 1989), p. 37. Her system posits four levels; initial level, teen dabblers, serious involvement, and criminal involvement. Dr. Paul Kelly is something of a rarity in that he wears the hats of both a Ph. D. psychologist who works full time in an in-patient youth mental health facility in San Diego, California, and of a minister in private practice in a group called Counseling Ministries in La Mesa, California. The literature of Satanism is somewhat top-heavy with ministers on the one hand, and with psychologists and mental health counselors on the other. A single individual who has a foot in both camps is a rarity, however. Paul Kelly, "Satanism and Vulnerable Adolescents," *Journal of Pastoral Counseling* 25 (1990), pp. 102-103, suggests only three levels of involvement; organized-underground, above-ground organized, and informal. Finally, from a conservative Catholic perspective, Fr. Paul Desmond, a priest who serves as the spiritual director of the Fr. Barry CYO Center and the East Bay Youth Center in Rhode Island, and is as well active in the religious anti-cult movement, suggests five levels of satanic involvement based on his pastoral experiences. Fr. Paul Desmond, "A Window on the World of Satanism: Why Teenagers Are Lured to it, the Risks They Run, and How We Can Liberate Them," *New Covenant* (July-August 1991), pp. 12-13. Despite the variations in semantics and, occasionally, in emphasis, all of these taxonomies overlap, and none offer elements not present in Hicks' version.

<sup>159</sup> Robert D. Hicks, "The Police Model of Satanic Crime," in James T. Richardson, Joel Best and David Bromley, *The Satanism Scare*, p. 179. Interestingly, Edred Thorsson who has entered these pages for his dual involvement with Ásatrú and the Temple of Set

It is, however, only the multigenerational construction of Satanism which interests us here. Multigenerational Satanism in the ACM model is defined as a secret, conspiratorial group of adherents, with membership in the cult passed down either by birth into the cult, or by recruitment into the group, following which all offspring of the new member will be expected to belong to the cult. More, the popular construction of multigenerational Satanism constitutes an inescapable context for all other levels of contemporary satanic practice. The efforts of the formally constituted public Satanic churches to reconstruct the spirit of a satanic religious tradition which in their view posits a dualist veneer over a largely pagan religious ethos is often impeded by the widespread public perception that the conspiratorial Satanist is linked to these satanic organizations.<sup>160</sup>

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has recently completed a manuscript on the history of American Satanism since the 1960s, *The Lords of the Left Hand Path*. He is currently in search of a publisher for this work.

<sup>160</sup> Perhaps the most insightful, and certainly the most readable, of these early ACM reactions to the appearance of the satanic churches, is Morris Cerullo, *The Back Side of Satan* (Carol Stream, Ill.: Creation House, 1973). Cerullo was in the 1950s a California based evangelist of some national note, who in the mid to late 1960s observed in Southern California a marked growth in various aspects of spiritualism and eastern mysticism, capped by the formation of Anton LeVay's glitzy Church of Satan in San Francisco. Convinced of a new onslaught by the Old Enemy on the youth of America, Cerullo dedicated his ministry to fighting Satanism in all its manifestations, from cults to covens. Taking to the radio airwaves, and to the streets in a gaudily decorated "witchmobile," Cerullo set out to do battle with all of these masks of the Enemy. His chapter headings set out the many forms of the conspiracy. These are listed in part below, as the titles are one of the earliest comprehensive compendiums of the parameters of the religious ACM conception of Satanism in contemporary America:

The New Face of Satan  
Satan's Target: You!  
Hollywood Leads the Parade  
"Classroom Invasion"  
Counter-Attack!  
The Manson 'Messiah'  
Satan Got Me Off  
The In-Humane Society  
The Sex Trap  
First Church of Satan  
Jeane Dixon-Angel of Light  
Charge-a-Hex  
Spooks and Spirits  
Secrets of a Satanist Priest  
Meditation-a Trip to Chaos



In addition, the multigenerational model provides a context for the efforts of youthful 'dabblers' in the occult to claim that their activities are diabolic, and therefore, worthy of attention, by claiming that their activities are somehow assisted or directed by these shadowy Satanists. It is as well the context in which the efforts of the various anti-cult movements justify their own activities to combat the satanic menace.

Finally, in terms of the scope of the dissertation as a whole, the unadulterated manichaeism of the multigenerational Satanist model easily feeds into the apocalyptic millenarianism of Christian Identity and other racist religious traditions, reinforcing the view of these adherents that contemporary society is irredeemably evil--that the earth is the literal domain of Lucifer, and that this fact constitutes proof positive that the End is nigh. In this view, the racist millenarians' view of the Jew as the conscious instrument of the devil in this world is a mere variation on the theme of the multigenerational satanist. Both in fact share a number of characteristics which have been alluded to throughout this dissertation.

It is at the level of multigenerational family involvement in Satanism that the most extreme formulations of the current satanism scare stand or fall, for here are committed the most heinous of crimes: child abuse, human sacrifice, kidnapping, brainwashing, and sexual violence--all perpetrated by a shadowy international network of social elites--police, judges, lawyers, doctors, politicians, indeed, anyone who could be in a position to commit or cover up these crimes is a prime suspect for involvement.<sup>161</sup> These actions are remarkably similar to the alleged depredations of the conspiratorial Jew.

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#### Origin and Activity of Demons More Than Conquerors.

<sup>161</sup> For some insight into the religious anti-cult version of the satanic conspiracy scenario, featuring elite Satanists in positions throughout society to perpetrate and later cover up evidence of their crimes (with child abuse a central motif), see the fascinating "docudrama" novel by Denver based Evangelical radio talk show personality Bob Larson. Bob Larson, *Dead Air* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1991). For a caustic review of this text from a

The astonishing similarity of the construction of the multigenerational Satanist and the shadowy elite Jew was brought home in graphic form with the sudden appearance and widespread acceptance in the anti-cult movement of a document which came to be known as the WICCA Letters. WICCA in this construction is an acronym for Witches International Coven Council (what the final 'A' stands for has never been explained), and the document purports to be the protocols of a mysterious gathering of satanic witches in Mexico in 1981. The resulting document was leaked to the San Diego police department, from which source it became public knowledge. Jerry Johnston reprints the document, and it is from this source that the copy below is taken. Johnston notes that he had found copies of the document in at least "five decently credible sources on Satanism." In reading the outline of the nefarious plot below, the reader is invited to recall the particulars of the *Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion* from an earlier chapter and note the considerable similarity of the two documents.<sup>162</sup>

1. To bring about the covens, both black and white magic, into one and have the actress [Shirley McClain?] to govern all.
2. To bring about personal debts causing discord and disharmony within families.
3. To remove or educate the new age youth by:
  - a. infiltrating boys/girls clubs and big sister/big brother programs
  - b. infiltrating schools, having prayers removed, having teachers teach about drugs, sex, freedoms
  - c. instigating, promoting rebellion against parents and all authority
  - d. promoting equal rights for youth
4. To gain access to all people's backgrounds and vital information by:
  - a. use of computers
  - b. convenience [?]
  - c. infiltration
5. To have laws removed to benefit our ways, such as:

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fundamentalist perspective, see Jon Trott, "A New Genre: Christian Porn," *Cornerstone* 20 (1991), p. 18.

<sup>162</sup> This comparison is noted as well in Arthur Lyons, *Satan Wants You* (New York: Mysterious Press, 1988), pp. 180-182.

- a. removing children from the home environment and placing them in our foster homes
- b. mandatory placement of children in our daycare centers
- c. increased taxes
- d. open drug and pornography market to everyone
- 6. Destroy government agencies by:
  - a. overspending
  - b. public opinion<sup>163</sup>

As if these plans laid by this rather incoherent cabal were not sufficiently nefarious, Jerry Johnston reveals that "a minister who is an expert on the occult and heavy metal music" had revealed to him a seventh, secret protocol:

By piecing together bits of information from various Ozzy Osbourne heavy metal album covers...[we learn that] the final plan is a blatant increase in satanic activity right up till 21 June 1999 when Satan himself will establish a physical reign on earth.<sup>164</sup>

Jerry Johnston dismisses the WICCA Letters with contempt for their clear illiteracy on modern occultism (not to mention their tortured English syntax), while Arthur Lyons goes further, directly raising the specter of the *Protocols of Zion*. Predictably, the evidence for the existence of these elite satanists, as in the case of the protagonists of the Jewish conspiracy, is problematic, given their ability to cover their tracks. What we are left with in the case of the multigenerational Satanists are the testimonies of the adult survivors of ritual abuse and the versions of children who allegedly have been victimized in satanic cult activities.

Despite the thin reed of this evidence, this construction of multigenerational Satanism has found considerable resonance in the United States in recent years. Why this should be will be considered below. First, the litany of charges will be detailed from a

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<sup>163</sup> Jerry Johnston, *The Edge of Evil: The Rise of Satanism in North America* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1991), pp. 14-15.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid., pp. 15-16.

variety of sources. Attention will be given to the historical sources of these beliefs, to the channels through which they are disseminated, and to the subsequent public impact of this material in an effort to clarify the interaction of that segment of the anti-cult community most focused on multigenerational Satanism with the dominant culture. Finally, the efforts of academics and others to debunk these charges will be considered, as will the distinctive reactions of those ACMs most closely identified with this construction of Satanism when faced with disconfirmation.

The reader is now invited to consider a selection of texts, all purporting to be first hand accounts of the activities of multigenerational or hereditary Satanic cults. The sources of these testimonies are quite varied, but several prominent themes will emerge. The most powerful of these testimonies tend to emerge from the accounts of the adult survivors of the satanic cult. These women (and as with the medieval construction of witchcraft, they are almost invariably female) are a remarkably homogeneous group: middle class, white, primarily although not exclusively middle aged, largely from suburban backgrounds, and invariably afflicted with an identifiable mental disorder, primarily Multiple Personality Disorder (MPD). As these women emerge to tell their horrifying tales of abuse, they never appear alone. Rather, they depend heavily upon an individual mentor or on a cadre of supporters, usually male, who upon examination turn out to be either psychotherapists whose treatment techniques 'freed' the patient to make her startling revelations (at no small physical risk to either patient or therapist, according to this literature), or conversely, who are religious professionals (ministers, lay religious counselors, etc.). Linking both sets of supporters however, is an unwavering faith in the veracity of their client/patient; regardless of the disconfirmative data brought forth to discredit the survivor testimony. These thorough going debunkings, the most effective of which emerge primarily from fundamentalist Christian sources, are offset with a simple slogan which is brandished as a talisman of the modern age: "believe the victim!"

The slogan is of no small interest, for another set of survivor testimonies is even more problematic than those of the adult 'victims': the testimonies of children who are posited as survivors of ritual abuse. Here the alleged victims are more diverse, both boys and girls, less affluent than the adult victims in many cases, but still invariably white and middle class, although locations for these depredations tend to be less suburban than either a small, semi-rural town or a large, anomic city.

The most important elements of these beliefs center around the popular construction of the satanic ritual itself. Below is a moderate formulation which offers the basic elements of the satanic ritual, circa the early 1970s:

The Progression begins by preparing the victims. The victims presented to the members [of the coven] are drugged. The ritual begins with Satanic chants and prayers. An animal sacrifice is offered to Satan to appease and please him. The human sacrifice is offered to please Satan who is asked to join them. The 13 members of the ritual are marked with symbols made from the blood of the sacrificed victim. An offering of a 'bride' is then made to Satan. The bride is used to join with Satan for use in the physical world. The bride is the victim who will survive. The bride can be [a] child, adolescent or adult, and is an unwilling participant in the ritual. She is (typically) abducted and drugged prior to the preparation. The drugs most commonly used are Angel Dust or LSD. The victim is then raped by all 13 members of the Satanic cult. During this time, the leader of the cult will ask Satan to enter his body in order to consummate the 'marriage'. During this part of the ritual, a frenzy will erupt among the members, and sexual and or violent acts will be committed with each other. The bride/victim will be told of her importance with this ritual. An unwilling secrecy pact with Satan and the members of the cult will be forced upon the victim. After the ritual, the victim is released due to the Satanists' belief that she will now serve Satan and his wishes on earth. If, by some chance, she believes differently, according to the Satanists, she will forget the ritual and all those members involved.<sup>165</sup>

What is perhaps most remarkable about this testimony is its plausibility. Nothing in this rendition stretches the credulity of the reader. In fact, very similar descriptions may be

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<sup>165</sup> Florangel Menendez, "Violent Ritualistic Victimization: An Attack on the Mind, Body and Spirit," *NCASA News* (Summer 1986), pp. 6-7.

found in a variety of sources from a day when the tales of Satanism did not raise many eyebrows. A good example of how varied this literature can be may be seen from the following quotation, taken from a medical study undertaken for the New York Selective Service System in the 1940s which consisted of interviews with some 2,000 men, and a number of women, who had either been discharged from the armed services, or were found unfit for service, due to homosexuality or some other abhorrent sexual behavior. The passage is illustrative not only of the relative unimportance placed on the existence of Satanism in America in the inter-war years, but just as interesting, of the milieu of society in which such activities were believed to take place. The dominant culture apparently felt little threatened by the behavior indulged in on the fringes of polite society. Describing what she had heard, but never seen, one Molly N. states:

She told me about wild religious parties where everybody rapes a virgin, about fifty or sixty men and women all having a party with a virgin picked up in the gutter. They were these terrible, wild Black Masses.<sup>166</sup>

As the tales of Satanic cult activities began to gain greater media credibility however, the plausibility of these testimonies came to be increasingly lost. Just how implausible these versions have become may be seen from the following three 'cult survivor' testimonies. These testimonies, chosen from a rather astonishing number of contenders, are offered here due to the tremendous impact which they made at the time they were published,<sup>167</sup> because each purports to detail the workings of a coven of

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<sup>166</sup> George W. Henry, M.D., *Sex Variants: A Study of Homosexual Patterns* (New York: Paul B. Hoeber, Inc., 1948), pp. 645-646. It is interesting to note too that in the 1940s, the discovery of a virgin in the gutters of a major metropolitan area raised nary an eyebrow!

<sup>167</sup> It should be noted that Mike Warnke's book had as much if not more impact than these survivor tales on the development of the modern construction of the 'Satanism scare'. However, Warnke's claims do not easily fit the profile of multigenerational Satanism as it has been developed in recent years. See Mike Warnke, *The Satan Seller* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1972).

multigenerational Satanists, and no doubt as a result of these conditions, they have drawn considerable attention from concerned scholars and crusading journalists. It will therefore come as no surprise that each has been thoroughly debunked! Yet each set of claims, widely publicized by the ACMs in the popular media, has had tremendous resonance throughout the culture. The debunkers meanwhile, have largely had to content themselves with writing in small circulation journals and attending an occasional academic conference.

The first extended testimony to be considered is in many ways the most fantastic. It is provided through the good offices of Jack Chick publications; the very gentleman whose greatest contribution to Western civilization and culture may be that he is credited with single-handedly reviving the 'naughty nun' as sectarian polemic through the writings of the alleged former Jesuit, Carlos Alberto.<sup>168</sup> Here, the House of Chick offers an updated

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<sup>168</sup> The 'naughty nun' as the object of sectarian polemic constitutes for the cultural historian a fascinating window into the collective psyche of a bygone era. To know what is calculated to shock and inflame a given community is to know that community at a level of which more conventional contemporary literature only hints. One of the early gems of this genre is Thomas Robinson, *Anatomie of the English Nunnery at Lisbon in Portvgall* (King's Lynn: Thew and Son, 1622). This document purports to be the account of Thomas Robinson, a seaman shipwrecked on Portuguese shores who is shocked to discover the fallen state of a cloister of English nuns of the Order of St. Bridget, numbering about 30, then resident in Lisbon. A poem in flowing Middle English prefaces the text and seeks to explain the rather salacious title. Rendered into modern English, this reads in part:

But if you look upon the other side,  
A slighter grate does such a wall divide;  
Which up and down is lifted at their leisure,  
As nuns and friars one another pleasure.

A profusion of these texts emerged from the late eighteenth to the mid-19th century, the most influential of which seems to have been the alleged confessions of one ex-nun in Montreal, Maria Monk, which served to re-stimulate interest in the genre. See Maria Monk, *Awful Disclosures by Maria Monk of the Hotel Dieu Nunnery of Montreal* (New York: Maria Monk, 1836). Similar, albeit lesser known efforts, include Thomas Roscoe, ed. *Female Convents. Secrets of Nunnaries Disclosed. Compiled From the Autograph Manuscripts of Scipio De Ricci, Roman Catholic Bishop of Pistola and Prato. By Mr. De Potter* (D. Appleton & Co., 1834); and Henrietta Caracciolo, *Memoirs of Henrietta Caracciolo of the Princes of Forino, Ex-Benedictine Nun*, Second Edition, (London: Richard Bentley, 1864). Henrietta Caracciolo's story is perhaps the most intriguing, although it probably had the least impact on the reading public. In place of the erotic and the scandalous, Caracciolo's convent is a more mundane tale of boredom, bickering, petty spites and priestly tyrannies, that over time created in her a serious crisis of faith. For a

version of the late medieval witch Sabbat, with some elements of the later Black Mass, which contains most of the charges brought against the witch in the post-*Malleus Maleficarum* inquisitional literature. Our hostess for this journey into darkness is "Dr.

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critical contemporary view of this genre, see Barbara Welter, "From Maria Monk to Paul Blanshard: A Century of Protestant Anti-Catholicism," in Robert N. Bellah and Frederick E. Greenspahn, *Uncivil Religion: Interreligious Hostility in America* (New York: Crossroad, 1987).

The 'naughty nun' motif eventually degenerated from sectarian polemic to private titillation when the dominant culture came to accept as axiomatic the perception of the nunneries as the scenes for the ribald activities of bored and jaded inmates. Bawdy jests and songs were one aspect of this transformation, but of more interest is the literary adoption of this scenario by pornographic or simply racy 'confessional' novels. A good example of the latter is an Austrian confessional novel written, apparently, in the World War I era: Edith Cadivec, *Confessions & Experiences*, Hugo Gaspari, trans., (New York: Grove Press, 1971).

Currently, these cloistered confessionals appear to have come full circle, returning to the realm of polemic literature. In this case however, the 'naughty nuns' are themselves the source of these works and the case being argued is an impassioned feminist polemic rather than a sectarian debate. Such a work is offered by a group of lesbian nuns in search of validation in, Rosemary Curb and Nancy Manahan, eds., *Breaking Silence: Lesbian Nuns on Convent Sexuality* (London: Columbus Books, 1985). Ironically, the ranks of wiccan witchcraft appear to have been swelled by the influx of feminist current or former nuns. On this historically resonant development, see Donna Streichen, "From Convent to Coven," *Epiphany Journal* 8 (Summer 1988). A constant theme running through Streichen's interviews centers on the impact of Vatican II reforms on creating the spiritual void in convent life which came to be filled by an increasingly strident feminism which led the sisters first to question and then to a highly selective approach to Church dogma before their satori-like discovery of the 'goddess within'. (pp. 7-8)

Naturally, the reappearance of convent polemics would stimulate a reaction in the form of a traditionalist backlash supporting the medieval and Reformation constructions of the nunnery as the playground of Satan--and the brothel of the priesthood--in the tradition of Master Robinson quoted above. Into the breach therefore, rides the catalogue of the House of Chick, better known as Chick Publications of Chino, California. Chick Publications president, Jack Chick, a fundamentalist with strong ties to the fringes of the far right wing and the most radical sectors of the anti-cult movement, happily purveys a catalogue that runs the gamut from serious devotional literature to comic books available at this writing in 32 languages! The jewels in Chick's stable however, are polemic works which feature satanic survivor stories and a brand of fervent anti-Catholicism which has become unfashionable in most sectors of the religious right today. The 'naughty nun' motif has been ably taken over by Carlos Alberto, a self professed ex-Jesuit whose primary claim to fame is his juxtaposition of the convent as a brothel for priests and the Jesuits as agents of world domination conspiracy motifs. See the Chick Publication catalogue for the original Alberto story and several subsequent volumes seeking to defend the author against well founded charges of fraud. For the charges themselves, see Gary Metz, "The Alberto Story," 1981 pamphlet distributed by Jesus People USA, Chicago, IL. Good secondary sources on the controversy include George Johnson, *Architects of Fear*, pp. 87-88, 98-99; and Philip Jenkins and Daniel Maier-Katkin, "Occult Survivors: The Making of a Myth," in James T. Richardson, Joel Best and David G. Bromley, *The Satanism Scare*, p. 129.



Rebecca Brown," who presents the testimony of her 'friend', and 'patient', "Elaine."<sup>169</sup> Dr. Brown's real name turns out to be Ruth Irene Baily, although she has since had her name legally changed to Rebecca Brown. Ruth Baily was born and raised in Indianapolis.<sup>170</sup> "Elaine," now known as Edna Elaine Moses but born Edna Elaine Knost in New Castle, Indiana,<sup>171</sup> presents herself as a former priestess in a multigenerational satanic coven into which her mother sold her in return for the money supplied by a satanic nurse for a needed operation on Elaine's cleft palate.<sup>172</sup> Elaine's tale, told over the course of two cassette interviews with Jack Chick and two books published by Chick Publications,<sup>173</sup> is notably different from the tales told by the more well known satanic survivors, Lauren Stratford and Michelle Smith which will be considered below only in one particular: in keeping with the customs of the House of Chick, the satanic order in which she presided as High Priestess was posited as a facet of the Catholic-Masonic conspiracy--a theory which Jack Chick wholeheartedly champions.<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>169</sup> Dr. Rebecca Brown, *He Came to Set the Captives Free* (Encino, CA.: Chick Publications, 1986). The passage is reprinted in Jerry Johnston, *The Edge of Evil*, pp. 173-176. Johnston, otherwise rather quick to believe these tales, demurs a bit on the product of the House of Chick: "We'll simply take this account on a Studs Terkel basis...A definite 'Believe-It-Or-Not' entry, here is...Elaine, an ex-high-priestess in a highly organized satanic cult called the Brotherhood..."

<sup>170</sup> G. Richard Fisher, Paul R. Blizard and M. Kurt Goedelmann, "The 'Amazing' Saga of Rebecca and Elaine," *The Quarterly Journal* 9 (October-December 1989), pp. 9-10.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>173</sup> The cassettes were titled *Closet Witches 1* and *Closet Witches 2*. The books are *He Came to Set the Captives Free* and *Prepare for War*. All are available from Chick Publications.

<sup>174</sup> Even this detail is not without significance. In the consideration below of MPD symptoms and the 'Satanism scare' it will be noted that MPD patients often come to espouse--with absolute conviction-- the most strongly held beliefs of their therapists or advisors. That once removed from these influences, the conviction of the patient that she has been the victim of satanic abuse also disappears is noted most tellingly in a letter from a family member of one such patient. Anon., "MPD Problems," Letter to the Editor, *Cornerstone* 21 (1992), p. 4.

Elaine it seems became a queen, having wed Satan (with the groom posited as appearing in a white tuxedo and renting space in a Presbyterian Church (!) for the ceremony). There follows a whirlwind honeymoon in exotic California, followed by a lucrative career in which the simple girl from Indiana is transformed into a combination super ambassador--meeting with heads of state and the cream of international society--and a no less exciting career as an arms dealer for Lucifer. She is aided in all this by a demon who possesses her, allowing her to speak any language fluently. She was eventually rescued from this life of affluence and excitement by Dr. Brown, whose Christian love eventually frees Elaine--at great risk to both women--from Satan and his legions.<sup>175</sup> Here is her testimony:

Human sacrifices, as with all cult meetings, are never held in the same place twice. Most members do not find out the location of the meeting until a few hours prior to its start. Sacrifices are always held in the most hidden and isolated areas possible. In large cities this is sometimes a problem, but there are usually enough vacant or abandoned warehouses and buildings available. Rarely does The Brotherhood hold a human sacrifice outside except when very secluded and isolated country or swampy areas are available. This is not true with the younger, bolder people tripped out on drugs. They are not overly concerned with security and because of this The Brotherhood sees to it that many of them are discovered by the police and arrested, or are simply exterminated to prevent trouble. They are always declared to be insane; The Brotherhood sees to this so that a serious connection with satanism is not made.

Specific committees are appointed and maintained within The Brotherhood to set up the necessary equipment and to provide clean-up afterwards. Satanists who are also policemen are almost always on these committees. Their function is to prevent any interference from law enforcement agencies. The equipment, such as the altar or in large cities, Satan's golden throne, is transported in plain vans. It can be quickly set up and taken down. The bodies are almost always disposed of by cremation. Babies are rather easily ground up -- even in a garbage disposal, and are often disposed of in this manner. Occasionally the body is cremated at the site of the sacrifice. When this is not practical, there usually is no difficulty in

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<sup>175</sup> G. Richard Fisher, Paul R. Blizard and M. Kurt Goedelmann, "The 'Amazing' Saga of Rebecca and Elaine," pp. 7-8. The full story of this adventure is well worth reading, and can be found in Rebecca Brown, M.D., *He Came to Set the Captives Free*.

using the facilities of a nearby mortuary. Also crematory facilities at veterinary hospitals or animal shelters are frequently used. The highly disciplined and carefully planned work of both the setup and clean-up committees have been responsible for keeping the practice of human sacrifice out of the public eye for many years...

I will describe here a Black Sabbath -- also called the Black Mass -- that I was forced to attend. I was, at the time, a minor, not yet a high priestess and was literally a captive. Black Sabbaths take place once per year. Always at the time of the full moon and on Easter weekend...

As the high priest and high priestess came out onto the platform an absolute silence fell over the crowd...The main Easter sacrifice is always a man. Occasionally additional sacrifices of women, children or animals are made, but the ceremony centers around the sacrifice of a man. Often a hitchhiker is picked up some days before the ceremony and is carefully guarded until the time of the meeting. In the eyes of the crowd, that man becomes Jesus and Satan's supposed victory over Jesus at the cross is celebrated.

I watched in utter horror as a crown of huge long thorns was driven into the young man's head, the thorns going so deep as to pierce his skull. Then he was stripped and beaten with whips tipped with metal studs, and tortured with spikes and red-hot pokers. Finally he was nailed to a wooden cross which was then picked up and put in a hole in the ground just in front of the middle of the platform. I will never forget the stench of the burned and tormented flesh, the screams of the victim, his writhing agony, his pleas for mercy. The crowd roared like a pack of wild animals, the inhuman voices of many demons from within the crowd joining in. They jeered and cheered as the cross was raised into place and dropped down into the hole. The high priest urinated on the victim and members of the congregation threw feces at him while everybody cheered Satan's supposed victory and then bowed down and worshipped Satan.

... Finally the high priest drove a long spike through the man's head, pinning it to the cross, killing him. The crowd went crazy, screaming and shouting and dancing in crazed ecstasy at the "victory." They loudly proclaimed all victory and power and honor to their father Satan.

The meeting then turned into a sex orgy. Every type of sexual perversion imaginable was practiced . . . . The victim's blood was drained off, mixed with drugs and alcohol, and was drunk by the high priest and high priestess and passed through the crowd. Many of the crowd went up to desecrate the body. The night hours passed while the drugged, demonic drunken frenzy of the crowd continued. Eventually the body, separated from the head, was ground up and portions were mixed with drugs and other substances. Those who wanted more power ate some of the mixture. The third day, as people began to come down from their drugged state, they left for home in two's and three's -- all proclaiming that their great and glorious father Satan had won yet another victory over the enemy Jesus Christ.<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> Jerry Johnston, *The Edge of Evil*, pp. 174-176.

It did not take long before the claims of Dr. Rebecca Brown were refuted, but this did not take place before the claims themselves were disseminated by the mass media to a far greater audience than would learn of the disconfirming evidence. In 1987, Elaine and Dr. Brown 'played the Palace' of Satanic confessionals; the Geraldo show!<sup>177</sup> It turns out that Ruth Irene Baily, soon to become Rebecca Brown, established a residency at Ball Memorial Hospital in Muncie, Indiana, where by 1979 she had begun to establish something of a reputation for eccentricity by attempting to exorcise the Intensive Care Unit.<sup>178</sup> More exorcisms followed in the rooms of various, unnerved, patients. The dim view which hospital administrators took of these forays against the forces of evil convinced Dr. Brown that Ball Memorial was "one of Satan's special hospitals"; an impression which was greatly reinforced by the many "kinds of harassment" which the doctor, now divorced from her husband and living with Elaine, suffered at the hands of the satanic hospital staff and their allies; highly placed Satanists in the local police and city administration. By now, Dr. Brown was claiming to head an "underground railroad" which had rescued about 1,000 ex-Satanists from the clutches of the curiously inept Satanic cult. It was, however, not until a carload of enraged Satanists, not satisfied with having hastened the death of Dr. Brown's mother, swept down on the couple with murder on their minds that the conflict came to a head. Once again, the cult that couldn't shoot straight failed, despite having the tactical advantage of Elaine being in a coma from leukemia at the time. The women escaped with only the clothes on their backs, and the Satanists were left to exact their vengeance in

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<sup>177</sup> G. Richard Fisher, Paul R. Blizard and M. Kurt Goedelmann, "The 'Amazing' Saga of Rebecca and Elaine," p. 7. Cf. David Alexander, "Giving the Devil More than His Due," *The Humanist* (March/April 1990), p. 7.

<sup>178</sup> The material which follows is drawn from G. Richard Fisher, Paul R. Blizard and M. Kurt Goedelmann, "The 'Amazing' Saga of Rebecca and Elaine," pp. 9-15. For further, no less bizarre, details, Cf. David Alexander, "Giving the Devil More than His Due," pp. 7-8.

the form of a juvenile fit of pique--they vandalized the house and office and assassinated the household pets! Apprised of their daring escape, the relatives of the women, deluded by Satan into thinking that the dynamic duo were in his service, moved to have them both committed to a psychiatric institution.

Greater tribulations were in store, however! On 17 October 1983 Elaine was taken to St. Vincent's Hospital in Indianapolis, her body covered with lesions. She was clearly suffering from a massive drug overdose. An investigation was begun involving the Attorney General's office, the Federal Drug Enforcement Administration, St. John's Hospital and the Indiana Medical Licensing Board. Rebecca Brown's medical license was suspended for 90 days pending an investigation. The results of that investigation, in a 22 count verdict, found that Dr. Brown had prescribed massive quantities of Demerol for Elaine, and was herself addicted to the drug. In fact, she passed out Demerol to other women and instructed them on how to inject the drug. Various instances of specific, non-drug related medical malpractice were found as well, including a number of diagnoses of patients whose disorders were attributed to "demons, devils and other evil spirits." Finally, other instances of Dr. Brown's bizarre behavior were noted with alarm--especially her possession of a handgun and frequent threats to shoot people she was convinced were demon possessed.

Despite these setbacks, Jack Chick continues to champion Dr. Brown. The books and tapes remain on the market, and if Geraldo has ceased to find the story credible, he has to date made no retraction. The primary investigators of the story from *The Quarterly Journal* emerge from the fundamentalist/evangelical world, while the editor of that journal, Keith A. Morse, was formerly associated with Jack Roper and CARIS. While the circulation figures of *The Quarterly Journal* are unavailable to the author, it may safely be posited that the Geraldo broadcast had a considerably greater audience than the small, specialized journal which published the investigation. Thus, while disconfirmation was surely uncomfortable for the principles of this controversy, there was little practical

pressure on either Dr. Brown or Jack Chick to formulate creative responses to the crisis. Such would not be the case with Lauren Stratford or Michelle Smith.

The testimonies of Michelle Smith and Lauren Stratford are so similar that to assess their impact it is necessary to examine them together. Smith's *Michelle Remembers* appeared in 1980, Stratford's *Satan's Underground* in 1988.<sup>179</sup> Both purport to tell of the authors' dreadful abuse as children at the hands of a multigenerational satanic cult. Both survived the most extreme sexual, physical and psychological abuse imaginable, and just when all hope for escape from their plight appeared to be lost, both women found belief, solace, and eventual redemption proffered by a supportive outsider who in turn was able to introduce the scarred victims of this form of ritual abuse to the cohesive networks of support provided by the ACMs. In Michelle Smith's case, psychiatry, in the person of Dr. Lawrence Pazder, provided the path for her release. For Lauren, rescue came in the form of the evangelical 'electronic church', in the person of evangelist Johanna Michaelson. Lauren found considerable support, in fact, unstinting loving acceptance, perhaps for the first time in her life, in the evangelical and fundamentalist community--at least until the dramatic debunking her claims received at the hands of Jon Trott and *Cornerstone Magazine*. Before exploring this disconfirmation however, it would be well to let Johanna Michaelson set the stage for what is to follow. Her introduction to Stratford's book could as well introduce the work of Michelle Smith. Thus, it is worthwhile to consider this introduction in detail, for in it, Mrs. Michaelson in a temperate and reasoned language unusual in this genre, presents all of the issues which concern us in the examination of the contemporary construct of multigenerational Satanism:

This will not be an easy book to read. The story of Lauren's abuse, of the years of horrors and tortures she experienced, of the

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<sup>179</sup> Michelle Smith and Laurence Pazder, M.D., *Michelle Remembers* (New York: Pocket Books, 1980). Lauren Stratford, *Satan's Underground: The Extraordinary Story of One Woman's Escape* (Eugene, OR: Harvest house, 1988).

satanic rituals and murders she witnessed, will prove more than many of you can bear. Some of you will be tempted to dismiss this book altogether...

That attitude is precisely what the satanists are counting on. They're depending on our disbelief and fear and ignorance--on our out-of-hand rejection of cases like Lauren's. Yet victims across the country are telling stories very much like hers. In virtually every city and town I've travelled to during the last three years, at least one person has come to me after my lecture to tell me, often weeping and in frightened whispers, of rituals, abuse and human sacrifice. Hundreds of children in preschools and kindergartens across the country are talking about grown ups in robes, chanting in a strange guttural language while they perform dark ceremonies that include sexual abuse. They tell about watching animals and little babies being tortured and killed with knives. At least 70 preschools have been investigated for alleged ritualistic abuse of children in the last few years. Similar cases can be found in preschools and neighborhoods in every state of this country.

The stories are so inconceivably horrifying that few individuals in the court system believe them. But then again, it was only a short time ago that we had a problem in believing that incest was rampant. How much harder it is for most of us to accept the fact that there are groups of parents and teachers, doctors, lawyers, ministers, or other "pillars of the community" who are involved in devil worship and ritual abuse of children. Law enforcement officers have told me that in many parts of this country their officers no longer even bother to record the ritualistic aspects of a crime. They know that the chances of gaining a court conviction in any case that even breathes the word "satanic" are virtually nil...

Yet in the past few years adult survivors, defectors from satanist camps, and investigators have begun to shed some light on the satanists' tactics. Animals are indeed killed and buried, but are later dug up and disposed of elsewhere. The children are frequently given a stupefying drug before the rituals so that their senses and perceptions are easily manipulated in the dim candlelight of the ritual scene. The pornographic photographs of the children don't show up because they're carefully kept in vaults of private collectors. The "airplane trips" are guided imagery/visualization voyages taken while the children were on the drugs slipped to them in their lemonade. Or perhaps the plane trip was quite real, but they were flown only a short distance to the abuse site and not to some distant place as the child was told... 180

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180 Johanna Michaelson, "Foreword," in Lauren Stratford, *Satan's Underground*. The belief in the widespread kidnapping of children for satanic abuse has become so pervasive that one Georgia woman, Faye Yeager, has formed an underground railroad to rescue children. Charged with kidnapping and child abuse in Atlanta, she was acquitted in 1992. The charges were based on video tapes made by Mrs. Yeager in which she appears to be brow beating the children into shaping stories of ritual abuse which fit her own stereotypical conception of what satanic ritual abuse should constitute. The case was televised live on the *Court Channel* cable network. The broadcast was a study in incomprehension as analysts representing the cream of the New York legal community attempted to understand both the rampant charges of Satanism which, on the thinnest of

Mrs. Michaelson provides a horrifying indictment of the "satanic cult," in two particulars: its vile abuse of children are at the center of her concern, but the story of Lauren Stratford (and Michelle Smith) is not merely the story of the abuse of children. Both of these women allege that they grew up in the clutches of multigenerational satanic cults, and thus, adults too must be believed, and rescued. Belief in this construction of satanism is the key element in the view of Mrs. Michaelson, and of the wider anti-cult and mental health therapeutic communities who are most involved in the battle against the conspiratorial satanic cults. "Believe the victim" is the recurrent sub-text of this genre of the literature of Satanism. Granted, this is not easy for any rational man or woman to do, given the fantastic nature of the charges! After all, these outsiders do not know the victims of ritual abuse. They have not held them as they cried, convulsed, went into hysterics, screamed through the night...<sup>181</sup> For those who lack personal experience--or transcendent faith--and for whom only coldly rational explanations will suffice, these are provided as well. A body disinterred, drugs and potions to simulate flight, and a Sabbath which leaves no trace, for it was but a drug induced visualization! <sup>182</sup> Against such a combination of faith, fervor and a determination that the victim not be victimized again in the court of public opinion, what credence will be given to the protests of such experts as Ken Lanning, the FBI's specialist in child sex crimes, when he explains that a crime scene can not be so easily erased. That bodies buried even a short time leave traces. That drugs administered

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evidence, pervaded the trial, and how the jury could, having viewed the tapes of Mrs. Yeager's inquisitions of the children, find her not guilty. For the background of this case, see Jan Hoffman, "The Devil and Faye Yager," *The Village Voice*, 12 June 1990; "Savior or Abuser?" *Atlanta Constitution*, 7 May 1990, p. 3. Bob Larson paints a thinly disguised portrait of Faye Yager as a persecuted but heroic protector of children in *Dead Air*.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid., pp. 151-163.

<sup>182</sup> For the medieval version of this construction, virtually unchanged in any particular, see Jules Michelet, *Satanism and Witchcraft*, A. R. Allison, trans., (New York: Walden, 1939).



to children do not vanish from the system from the morning opening of a day care center to the afternoon return of the child to his home.<sup>183</sup> How fantastic these charges may become is illustrated by a brief examination of the tales of Michelle Smith and Lauren Stratford.

Of the two testimonies, Lauren Stratford's is the more approachable. It follows a straight chronological line, and avoids Michelle's disconcerting tendency to drop into psychobabble (the obvious result of Dr. Pazder's influence, first as therapist, and then as husband).<sup>184</sup> Stratford's earliest recollections depict a child of a psychotic and violent mother and a weak father who soon disappeared from her life. Lauren's mother in fact emerges as a monster of inhuman proportions, prostituting her daughter regularly from the age of six in return for odd jobs around the house performed by various disreputable handymen,<sup>185</sup> before finding the far more lucrative field of child pornography, with young Lauren's most memorable experience in these years involving a camera and a dog:

Soon the camera was clicking. After a couple of shots I learned that I was expected to do more than pose in front of a pet animal. Much more. It was getting to be more like my experiences in the basement, and soon it was worse. The animal's sexual part was forced into my mouth. I had to put my fingers in places I didn't want to. I didn't want to touch or feel or smell or taste. I only wanted to shrivel up and disappear in the woods. Again and again I gagged. I kept wiping my mouth with my forearm. That only made the men laugh as the camera kept clicking.<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>183</sup> Kenneth V. Lanning, "Satanic, Occult, Ritualistic Crime: A Law Enforcement Perspective," p. 9; author interview with Kenneth Lanning, 2 August 1991. For the best available coverage of this issue from a law enforcement perspective, see Kenneth V. Lanning, *Child Sex Rings: A Behavioral Analysis For Criminal Justice Professionals Handling Cases of Child Sexual Exploitation* (Washington, D.C.: National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, Dec. 1989).

<sup>184</sup> John Dorschner, "Speak of the Devil: Psychotherapy Discovers Satan," *Tropic* (5 November 1989), p. 14.

<sup>185</sup> Lauren Stratford, *Satan's Underground*, pp. 19-22.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35. Once again, the construction here is of some interest, as the late medieval construction of the witch Sabbath also saw the witches having intercourse with the devil in the form of a goat or a black dog. See Norman Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons* (New York: Basic Books, 1975), p. 199; and Jeffrey Burton Russell, *Witchcraft in the Middle*

It would not be long before an older and wiser Lauren would be sold to a man known only as Victor, and Lauren's degradation would be complete. Used as a sort of a temple prostitute for Victor's friends,<sup>187</sup> Victor soon became jaded by sex and leisure and eventually fell under the influence of Tom, a "Master Counselor in Satanism."<sup>188</sup> Lauren is soon forced into accepting initiation into the cult by the threat that a baby would be sacrificed in her name each week that she refused.<sup>189</sup> At this point, the narrative becomes as disjointed as Lauren Stratford's life. Lauren is serving the cult, and being led by 'spirit guides' whose role is to advise, to cajole, and ultimately, to dominate her every action. She asserts that at this time she gave birth to three babies, two girls and a boy, and that all were sacrificed to Satan in the most horrible ways. From Lauren's story a new name for an old concept would become a fixture in the literature of Satanism: the satanic breeder.<sup>190</sup>

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*Ages* (Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University Press, 1972), p. 246, for the devil as dog motif. It should be recalled as well Jon Trott's observation noted above that Bob Larson's novel *Dead Air* constituted a new genre: Christian porn. One suspects that something of this is going on here. Harvest House, the publishers of *Satan's Underground*, is a Christian publisher which would no doubt be appalled at the accusation that any item on their catalogue is pornographic. Yet much of *Satan's Underground* is, by the puritanical standards of Christian literature, if not pornographic, certainly titillating. In a subculture such as is found among fundamentalist and evangelical Protestants in the United States, the literature of Satanism is by far the most explicitly sexual material available. And it's guilt free! This literature is in fact, recommended reading for the congregation. And like the progression from Henry Miller to the more explicitly erotic works of today, the Satanic literature has become increasingly explicit in recent years. *Michelle Remembers*, although published by a secular publishing house, is far less frank in detailing sexual scenes than is *Satan's Underground*. And *Satan's Underground* is prudish by comparison with Bob Larson's explicit descriptions of child sexual abuse in *Dead Air*.

<sup>187</sup> Lauren Stratford, *Satan's Underground*, pp. 63-96. In fact, this is something of an artless, demonic, *Story of O*, to which Lauren's adventures at this stage of her life bears an uncanny resemblance. See Pauline Réage, *Story of O*.

<sup>188</sup> Lauren Stratford, *Satan's Underground*, p. 93.

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 104.

<sup>190</sup> The medieval literature of witchcraft certainly has no lack of descriptions of young witches providing their children to the cult for initiation, but the idea of cult members being isolated on a farm or in an urban warehouse and forced to breed children for sacrifice--thus the term 'breeder'--appears a more modern construct. The devil enters the industrial age!

She sums up her greatest trauma, the sacrifice of her son, Joey, as the turning point of her life. The sacrifice of Joey would be the act that leads to Lauren's own salvation, for at the time of the sacrifice, Lauren had at last reached out for psychiatric help.<sup>191</sup> With the love and support of her therapist, and eventually of such Christian supporters as Johanna Michaelson, Lauren overcame the grip of Satan: a spiritual battle that was no more easy on her supporters than it was on Lauren Stratford herself.<sup>192</sup>

Michelle Smith's descriptions of her abuse at the hands of a multigenerational satanic cult are notably different from those of Lauren Stratford more in style than in detail. Her descriptions are somewhat less graphic than Lauren's were, but they do benefit by the omnipresence of Dr. Lawrence Pazder in the text, acting as something of a tour guide through these diabolic nether regions, and as an interpreter of the wonders to be found therein. Fortunately for Michelle--and for the reader--Dr. Pazder brought to his task not only his psychiatric credentials, but an extensive knowledge of Yoruba witchcraft as practiced in Nigeria.<sup>193</sup> Like Lauren, Michelle's mother gave her over to the cult, personified by Malachi (a more formidable figure than Victor), before meeting her own death from cancer nine years later. While she lived however, Michelle's mother was posited as a cult member--something that was never alleged about Lauren's abusive mother. Below is a brief composite of these disjointed descriptions.

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In the inquisitional literature, babies required for sacrifice were obtained primarily by theft and by the witch in her role as midwife/abortionist.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid., ch. 8. The memories of these events were brought back in therapy by means of hypnotic regression techniques. Interestingly, it appears that Lauren was able to compartmentalize her life to a remarkable degree. While giving birth to three children and participating in frequent nocturnal satanic rites, she was in the daylight hours leading a rather mundane life, working, going to her therapy sessions, and until the regression treatment, no one, apparently not even Lauren, was aware of her dreadful secret life.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid., pp. 156-157.

<sup>193</sup> Michelle Smith and Laurence Pazder, M.D., *Michelle Remembers*, p. 35.

Assuming the voice and demeanor of a frightened little girl, Michelle describes a group of women dressing her in a loose gown and preparing the ceremonial chamber. The furniture is moved and the walls are draped in black. an altar is constructed. One of the women appears to comfort the frightened child:

She's being like a mommy. And then she kisses me! She's kissing me and sticking her tongue in my....*mouth* ! [all emphasis in original]...

I don't like them hanging on to my arms...Someone's rubbing something on me, on my chest! It smells icky...I looked and it had funny eyes...it was like a mommy but it had Malachi's eyes!...

Help!...Help!...Help!...They were putting this stuff...putting it in my eyes, and my ears and my nose. Somehow it was getting in me, every way.

They were poking me. it felt like pins! They stuck those sticks not just in my mouth. They stuck them everywhere I had an opening! They just kept poking and rubbing...They are putting *ugly* in me...The lady is sealing it in now. She says its permanent. Permanent!

The child is now placed on the makeshift altar, surrounded by black candles, and chanting in a strange language begins:

I didn't have anything on...and they unbraided my hair and I didn't like it..There is a knife and cups...

No! I don't want to be cut!...Help me! They're making lines on me with a knife.<sup>194</sup>

With this crescendo, the ceremony ends and Michelle is left alone in the room. Worse would be to come, of course. Michelle would endure a ceremony, held in a cemetery, in which she would symbolically emerge from the womb of a cult adherent, marking a form of demonic rebirth which seals her to the cult as a hereditary member of the

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<sup>194</sup> Ibid., pp. 30-35.

multigenerational coven.<sup>195</sup> Under the guidance of Malachi, the cult (primarily composed of women) graduated from animal sacrifices<sup>196</sup> to the sacrifice of babies.<sup>197</sup>

All of this would become familiar fare in the literature of Satanism, but it must be recalled that Michelle Smith's story was the first child-survivor testimony to emerge, and it was taken seriously long before the book was published. Part of this may be attributed to Dr. Pazder's professional qualifications, but part too may well have been the atmosphere of the time. Recall that the psychiatric sessions depicted in *Michelle Remembers* took place throughout the 1970s. It was an interesting time for diabolic doings. The film *The Exorcist* was released in 1973, purporting to be an account of an actual exorcism, and the much inferior series of *Omen* films based loosely on the Book of Revelation would follow to reinforce the impression made by *The Exorcist*. The Catholic writer Malachi Martin had published a popular book on his own research into Catholic exorcisms, *Hostage to the Devil*.<sup>198</sup> Just as important, the disconfirming evidence had yet to appear. No one knew of the stories of Michelle and of Lauren, so no investigation was done. Multiple Personality Disorder was known chiefly through the popular book and film, *The Three*

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<sup>195</sup> Ibid., pp. 98-104.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid., pp. 119-122.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid., p. 213.

<sup>198</sup> Malachi Martin, *Hostage to the Devil: The Possession and Exorcism of Five Living Americans* (New York: Perennial Library, 1976, 1981). The Catholic Church remains somewhat wedded not only to the reality of the construction of the conspiratorial multigenerational Satanist, but to the view that the medieval Church largely created: the undifferentiated view of satanism, witchcraft and paganism as being but three visible faces of Satan in this world. For a popular presentation of this view, see the series of reports in the glossy Catholic periodical *30 Days in the Church and in the World*: Thomas Ricci, "Some Seek the Lord of Darkness"; Thomas Ricci, "USA: Police on the Trail of the Evil One"; Rachel Storm, "Great Britain: The Witch Confesses"; Guido Horst, "Germany: The Occult Triumphs in the Schools"; Jean Vernet, "France: An Ambiguous Rebirth of the Sacred"; and Rossana Ansuini, "And Turin Triples Its Exorcists," *30 Days in the Church and in the World* 2 (January 1989), pp. 52-61. The cover story of the issue encompassing all of the above reports is "Satanism: The Return of Beelzebub."

*Faces of Eve*.<sup>199</sup> Psychological disorders of this type had yet to become synonymous with Satanism. Clearly the public was primed to accept at face value the construction of multigenerational Satanism purveyed by Michelle Smith and Dr. Pazder. So too was the Catholic Church, and it was to the Church that Dr. Pazder and Michelle logically turned for solace in the early 1970s. They would not be disappointed. Nor would the reader, for at the point that they came in contact with the Catholic hierarchy, the construction of Satanism which Michelle was recalling took a fascinating new direction, incorporating strongly medieval elements, and indeed, going farther than Lauren Stratford would dare years later: actually claiming the physical presence of Satan at the Black Mass in a role virtually indistinguishable from that posited by the late medieval inquisitional literature.<sup>200</sup> The Church's receptivity to the overtures of Dr. Pazder and his patient is well illustrated by the 28 September 1977 statement from Bishop Remi De Roo of Victoria, British Columbia, which is offered as the frontpiece of *Michelle Remembers*:

The Church is well aware of the existence of mysterious and evil forces in the world. Each person who has had an experience of evil imagines Satan in a slightly different way, but nobody knows precisely what this force of evil looks like.

I do not question that for Michelle, this experience was real. In time we will know how much of it can be validated. It will require prolonged and careful study. In such mysterious matters, hasty conclusions could prove unwise.

It may well be that for people today, to hear this message coming from a five year old child is of particular significance.<sup>201</sup>

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<sup>199</sup> Corbett H. Thigpen and Hervey M. Cleckly, *The Three Faces of Eve* (New York: Popular Library, 1957).

<sup>200</sup> See for example, Henry Kramer and James Sprenger, *Malleus Maleficarum*, Montague Summers, trans. and ed., (London: John Roker, 1928); Francesco Maria Guazzo, *Compendium Maleficarum*, E. A. Ashwin, trans., Montague Summers, ed., (London: John Roker, 1929); or Sinistrari of Ameno, *Demoniality*, Isidore Liseux, trans. and ed., (Paris: Isidore Liseux, French text 1872, English edition 1879).

<sup>201</sup> Michelle Smith and Laurence Pazder, M.D., *Michelle Remembers*, frontpiece.

Indeed, the testimony of a five year old child might be of significance, but Michelle is not a five year old child. She is a grown woman who under hypnosis speaks in the voice of a five year old child. And it is in that child's voice that the appearance of Satan is described, complete with bits of doggerel verse, and something more: true to the medieval construction of witchcraft where the devil's mark placed on the body of the witch, Michelle's body is now manifesting such marks; a satanic stigmata. This is shown to the Catholic clergy, and Michelle begins to win greater credibility.<sup>202</sup> The medieval texts are clear on this point--it was after all a major obsession of the *Malleus* to examine the suspected witch for just such marks. And of Satan himself, the Old Serpent, well, he appears to Lauren as an old serpent.<sup>203</sup>

It will come as little surprise that both Michelle Smith and Lauren Stratford achieved no small measure of fame, and their stories were widely disseminated through the mass media and through public appearances in a variety of church and secular forums.<sup>204</sup> It did not take long however, before the appearances on Geraldo and Oprah and Donahue, to mention only a few of the most popular television talk shows, not to mention such 'soft news' formats as *20/20*, drew a reaction from skeptics. Michelle Smith's story was taken apart by the very community to which she most strongly appealed for support: the psychiatric community, who found in her case a classic study of MPD, in her treatment a warning about the future use of hypnotic regression therapy in treating MPD cases, in her biography proof positive of the old adage that it is impossible, even with the help of the

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<sup>202</sup> Ibid., pp. 246-247.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid., p. 253.

<sup>204</sup> James T. Richardson, Joel Best and David G. Bromley. "Satanism as a Social Problem," in James Richardson, Joel Best and David Bromley, eds. *The Satanism Scare*, pp. 11-12. For a good analysis of the issues involved in the dissemination and public reception of these survivor stories, see Philip Jenkins and Daniel Maier-Katkin, "Occult Survivors: The Making of a Myth," in *The Satanism Scare*, pp. 127-142.

devil, to be in two places at once, and in her champion and now husband Lawrence Pazder, an unconscionable breach of medical ethics.<sup>205</sup>

Worse was in store for Lauren Stratford--once again from the very community to which she turned for support (the fundamentalist and evangelical churches). Jon Trott and *Cornerstone Magazine* systematically debunked every claim made by *Satan's Underground*, painting a portrait of a very disturbed and unhappy young woman who suffered terribly from the delusions manifested through her affliction with MPD. Where Michelle Smith was treated with comparative compassion however, every detail of Stratford's life would be exposed in a thoroughly documented expose which would result ultimately in Harvest House withdrawing her book from circulation.<sup>206</sup>

The *Cornerstone* expose makes for some uncomfortable reading. Who after all would enjoy having his or her life so thoroughly dissected? Who again would care to have virtually every word they have ever written or spoken exposed as the most fantastic kind of lie? Especially before the one and only community that has ever lovingly accepted the author on her own terms? But here it is, from her real name (Laurel Wilson), to photographs of a closely knit, middle class family. What emerges from the mass of interviews and documents which John Trott and Gretchen and Bob Passantino have assembled in their story is a very lonely, troubled young woman with a penchant for telling fantastic stories, none of which were believed, and no two of which were ever the same. What emerges too is hardly the story of a viciously abused satanic "breeder." Rather, Laurel had never been pregnant, and had in fact been the product of a rather puritanical,

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<sup>205</sup> John Dorschner, "Speak of the Devil: Psychotherapy Discovers Satan," p. 14; Robert D. Hicks, *In Pursuit of Satan: The Police and the Occult*, pp. 142-147; Philip Jenkins and Daniel Maier-Katkin, "Occult Survivors: The Making of a Myth," in *The Satanism Scare*, pp. 133-136, 139-141; and Sherrill Mulhern, "Satanism and Psychotherapy: A Rumor in Search of an Inquisition," in *The Satanism Scare*, p. 149.

<sup>206</sup> American Library Association, "Satanism Book Withdrawn," *Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom* 39 (1990); and Ken Sidey, "Publisher Withdraws Satanism Story," *Christianity Today* 34 (19 February 1990), pp. 34-35.



strictly Christian upbringing. The scars which she displayed as the results of abuse were real enough--although at least three people on different occasions observed her cutting herself to create these scars. As for her starring role in child porn films, according to expert sources, in the years when this was supposed to be taking place, such films and magazines were all but nonexistent.<sup>207</sup>

When faced with disconfirmation, both Michelle Smith and her champion, Laurence Pazder reacted in much the same way as Lauren Stratford and her much diminished group of supporters: they raised their profiles and sharpened their stories.<sup>208</sup> At this writing, the 'Satanism Scare', with its associated phenomena of MPD 'survivor' groups and a rash of legal cases arising from charges of ritualistic child abuse in day care centers<sup>209</sup> is still

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<sup>207</sup> Gretchen and Bob Passentino and Jon Trott, "Satan's Sideshow," *Cornerstone* 18 (1989). Cf. Tim Tate, *Child Pornography* (London: Methuen, 1990).

<sup>208</sup> Robert D. Hicks, *In Pursuit of Satan*, p. 147; Sherrill Mulhern, "Satanism and Psychotherapy: A Rumor in Search of an Inquisition," in *The Satanism Scare*, p. 176. The model of which this reaction is most reminiscent is that of cognitive dissonance. See Leon Festinger, Henry W. Riecken, and Stanley Schachter, *When Prophecy Fails*.

<sup>209</sup> The literature on this subject in the wake of the McMartin preschool case is almost as vast as that dealing with MPD. For a good introduction to this problem, see David Finkelhor, Linda Meyer Williams and Nanci Burns, *Nursery Crimes: Sexual Abuse in Day Care* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1988). This text takes up the question of ritualistic abuse, using the McMartin case as a paradigm, on pp. 57-64. An in-depth study of a Miami Beach case serves as graphic evidence for the difficulty of determining when a case of sexual abuse of children in a day care setting is ritualistic in nature, or whether it involves a perpetrator with severe psychiatric problems, but who has little knowledge of the occult. See Jan Hollingsworth, *Unspeakable Acts* (New York: Congdon & Weed, 1986). The immense difficulty faced by law enforcement officers in seeking to investigate these cases is indicated in "The Occult Debate: Issue #5, The Extent of Ritualistic Abuse-National Conspiracy or National Hysteria?" *California Office of Criminal Justice Planning*, Special Report 1 (Winter 1989-1990), pp. 39-49; Kenneth V. Lanning, "Satanic, Occult, Ritualistic Crime: A Law Enforcement Perspective," pp. 4-8; and Robert D. Hicks, *In Pursuit of Satan: The Police and the Occult*, ch. 5. Agent Lanning notes as well in this context the notorious difficulty from a law enforcement perspective of staged crime scenes, that is, for a perpetrator to add occult flourishes to the crime in the belief that the 'Satan scare' has become so discredited that the child or the parents won't be believed by law officers or the courts. Interview with Kenneth Lanning, 2 August 1991. For good academic considerations of the problem, see Debbie Nathan, "Satanism and Child Molestation: Constructing the Ritual Abuse Scare," in *The Satanism Scare*, pp. 75-94; and Joel Best, "Endangered Children and Antisatanist Rhetoric," in *The Satanism Scare*, pp. 95-106.

raging unabated, feeding the popular belief in the reality of the model of multigenerational Satanism.

So important to the construct of multigenerational Satanism is the subject of MPD that a brief digression is in order to look at the subject more closely. The literature on MPD and on the organizations formed by MPD survivors is at this writing vast and apparently growing exponentially. Dr. George Ganaway, a primary authority on the subject, notes that in his experience, therapists play a great role in encouraging satanic fantasies among these patients.<sup>210</sup> In a greatly simplified presentation, Jon Trott writes of the Grade Five Syndrome, a condition often associated with MPD under which a subject under hypnosis will create incredible--and false--stories, often in an effort to gain the approval of the therapist. Given the reliance of MPD therapists on hypnotic regression techniques, a Grade 5 personality may explain why so few MPD patients invent stories as wildly improbable as those of Michelle Smith and Lauren Stratford.<sup>211</sup>

MPD survivor groups flourish as well. We have noted these in terms of the dissemination of the satanic cult scenario, but it is important to note that these are not the

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<sup>210</sup> For an introduction to the psychiatric literature on the subject which is comprehensible to the layman, see George K. Ganaway, "Historical Versus Narrative Truth: Clarifying the Role of Exogenous Trauma in the Etiology of MPD and its Variants," *Dissociation* 2 (December 1989), pp. 205-219.

<sup>211</sup> Jon Trott, "The Grade Five," *Cornerstone* 20 (1991), pp. 16, 18. Cf. the interview with Sherrill Mulhern, a research psychologist who discusses both Grade Five Syndrome, and of greater interest to this dissertation, comments on the decisive split which took place at the Fifth International Conference of Multiple Personality/Dissociative States which was held in 1988 in Chicago, and which pitted therapists of MPD patients who were reporting satanic abuse against those rejecting the reality of the reports. "Believe the patient" and "Don't victimize the patient again" seem to be the operant slogans of the former group. "Interview With Sherrill Mulhern," *Cornerstone* 20 (1991), pp. 18, 20; and Sherrill Mulhern, "Satanism and Psychotherapy," in *The Satanism Scare*, p. 145-172. For interviews with the supporters of the satanic stories at this conference, in particular Dr. Bennett Braun of Chicago, see John Dorschner, "Speak of the Devil: Psychotherapy Discovers Satan." Cf. in this context, Jeffrey S. Victor, "Satanic Cult Survivor Stories," *Skeptical Inquirer* 15 (Spring 1991), pp. 274-280. Finally, for an excellent, highly sympathetic case study account of some of the youngest MPD sufferers, see Dr. Robert S. Mayer, *Satan's Children: Case Studies in Multiple Personality* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1991).

only such groups. A good example of a group which is formed without reference to Satanism by and for MPD patients is Multiple Personality Dignity/Loved Ones of Multiples (MPD Dignity/LOOM) in Boulder, Colorado. MPD Dignity/LOOM is headed by Dr. Cindee Grace, a therapist and in addition, a feminist wiccan and the author of a self-published book, *Feminist Hypnosis*. Dr. Grace has heard of only a few MPD patients who claim to be survivors of satanic abuse (although Dr. Grace insists that the term 'satanic abuse' should be dropped in favor of a more sensitive construction along the lines of 'abusers who were satanists' on the politically correct grounds that most satanists abuse no one, while Christians who abuse their children--albeit without a ritual context--currently clog the courts).<sup>212</sup>

Finally, it is important to note that as the knowledge of the nature of MPD was more widely disseminated, this knowledge eventually impacted in a positive manner the work of law enforcement professionals and even members of the anti-cult movement. A classic example is Sgt. Randy Emon of the Baldwin Park Police Department in Baldwin, California. Sgt. Emon, an evangelical Christian, heads an organization, the Christian Cult Investigators Network (COIN) which serves to link together police and other law enforcement officials concerned with the phenomenon of occult crime. COIN is offered as a reference by various ACM texts in the context of what has become rather cynically referred to as "occult cops": a group which includes such officers as Sandy Gallant in San Francisco, Larry Jones in Boise, Idaho, and Chicago's own Robert Simindl.<sup>213</sup> Recently, Sgt. Emon wrote an essay detailing his change of mind on the reality of the multigenerational model of Satanism--a decision which resulted from his having learned more about MPD, and, quite by accident, having run across an article in *Omni Magazine*

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<sup>212</sup> Letters to author from Dr. Cindee Grace, 15 July 1991 and 29 July 1991.

<sup>213</sup> For a list of these resources, see Dr. Alan H. Peterson, ed., *The American Focus on Satanic Crime Volume I*, pp. 99-107.

detailing the stories of UFO contactees. Upon noting the incredible similarity of these stories to those which he had been hearing from alleged victims of satanic abuse, Sgt. Emon states: "after six years of study [I] was forced to re-evaluate the evidence and my stance on the issue."<sup>214</sup>

In closing this examination of the elusive conspiratorial Satanist, it might be of some value to briefly consider possible alternative explanations for the pervasive credibility which the multigenerational model has achieved throughout contemporary society.

According to the law enforcement model of the activities of multigenerational Satanists, the explanation for the 'Satanism scare' invariably centers on the phenomenon of rumor panics arising from urban legends.<sup>215</sup> Based primarily on the work of folklorist Jan Harold Brunvand of the University of Utah,<sup>216</sup> rumor panics tend to explode after long periods of gestation in which fears become stories, stories become "events" (never witnessed first hand, but always credited to an 'unimpeachable' source), and the "events" grow more 'apocalyptic' with each retelling. Eventually, a panic ensues, the authorities are called in, and when these authorities fail to find evidence to substantiate the rumor, a massive cover-up is posited by the general public, offering proof positive of the existence

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<sup>214</sup> The result of that reconsideration is Randy Emon, "Occult Cop: Credulous--Skeptical--Rational," unpublished, undated, privately circulated COIN document. The Omni story to which Sgt. Emon refers is Pamela Weintraub, "Secret Sharers," *Omni* (December 1991), which Sgt. Emon thoughtfully provided for this research. George K. Ganaway, "Historical Versus Narrative Truth: Clarifying the Role of Exogenous Trauma in the Etiology of MPD and its Variants," p. 212, also notes the similarity between UFO contactee stories and ritual abuse survivor stories. For a full examination of the current literature on UFOs, see John A. Saliba, "UFO Contactee Phenomena from a Sociopsychological Perspective," *Syzygy* 1 (Winter 1992), pp. 63-97.

<sup>215</sup> Interview with Kenneth Lanning, 2 August 1991; and Robert D. Hicks, "Police Pursuit of Satanic Crime, Part II, The Satanic Conspiracy and Urban Legends," *Skeptical Inquirer* 14 (Summer 1990), pp. 378-383.

<sup>216</sup> Jan Harold Brunvand, *The Choking Doberman and Other Urban Legends* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1984), pp. 169-186, details a satanic urban legend centering on the Proctor & Gamble corporate trademark. Cf. Jan Harold Brunvand, *The Vanishing Hitchhiker* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1981); and Jan Harold Brunvand, *The Mexican Pet* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1986).

of a high level conspiracy aimed at keeping secret the truth behind the rumor panic.<sup>217</sup>

The rumor panic scenario is undoubtedly true as far as it goes, but of far greater interest to the historian of culture are the questions of why a rumor panic takes hold in the first place, and of what materials are the rumors themselves constructed? In terms of multigenerational Satanism, why would rumors of the activities of conspiratorial Satanists strike such a raw nerve in the contemporary United States when, as we have noted, virtually identical constructions caused barely a ripple of interest before the 1960s?

While it is impossible to answer these questions with absolute certainty, it is possible to draw an analogy with other groups considered in the course of this dissertation and suggest some possible avenues for future research. It will be recalled first of all that Christian Identity as it is presently constituted in the United States grew out of British Israelism. The decisive break with British Israelism occurred from the late 1920s to the early 1930s; a time of great ferment in the United States. World War I had dragged the nation reluctantly into the community of nations in the face of a profound isolationist sentiment which peaked in the aftermath of the war, and which was fed in turn by the suspicion, fueled by the findings of the congressional inquiry into the role of the arms industry in involving the United States in the conflict, by the suspicion that a conspiratorial group of 'elites' were at the root of the changes in American society.<sup>218</sup> It was a suspicion which was fanned by such traumatic events as the crash of the stock market in 1929 and the

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<sup>217</sup> A good microcosm of a rumor panic about an alleged coven of Satanists in Jamestown, New York is offered by Jeffrey S. Victor, "The Spread of Satanic-Cult Rumors," *Skeptical Inquirer* 14 (Spring 1990), pp. 287-290. Cf. Jeffrey S. Victor, "The Dynamics of Rumor-Panics About Satanic Cults," in *The Satanism Scare*, pp. 221-236; and Robert W. Balch and Margeret Gilliam, "Devil Worship in Western Montana: A Case Study in Rumor Construction," in *The Satanism Scare*, pp. 249-262.

<sup>218</sup> On the Nye Committee, see Thomas A. Bailey, *A Diplomatic History of the American People*, Tenth Edition, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1980), p. 15; and Julius Pratt, Vincent P. DeSantis and Joseph M. Siracusa, *A History of United States Foreign Policy*, Fourth Edition, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1980), p. 314. On isolationism, see Selig Adler, *The Isolationist Impulse: Its Twentieth Century Reaction* (New York: Abelard-Schuman, 1957).

depression, but which was clearly based as well on social changes in the 'roaring '20s' which saw an unprecedented emancipation of women, on shifting demographic patterns which saw the break-up of stable rural and semi-rural communities, and on a massive wave of foreign immigration (especially of Eastern European Jews), to name but a few events of the era. The social changes in the United States were, in the opinion of many if not most observers, clearly for the worst. It is from the cauldren such social ferment that millenarian movements are born, and that political movements are radicalized. Popular fears in such times tend to grasp for the safe anchor of tradition, and it is from the tradition that a face is quite often given to these fears, and with the face, a set of characteristics which serve to objectify the hitherto nameless of evil which in this view lays siege to the community of the faithful. For Christian Identity, that face was first of all the conspiratorial Jew, as defined in such texts as *The Protocols of Zion*, the anti-Semitic series in the *Dearborn Independent* and later, in Elizabeth Dilling's *The Plot Against Christianity*.

In short order, the traditionally philo-Semitic beliefs of British Israelism<sup>219</sup> became the powerfully anti-Semitic theology of Christian Identity, and the conspiratorial Jew was posited in a powerfully manichaeian scheme as the mere terrestrial instrument of Satan. Yet in constructing the portrait of the actions of the nefarious 'International Jew', Identity theorists invented nothing new. Rather, they reached backwards into the cultural repository of traditional fears for an archetype of absolute evil, and the face of their fears appeared indistinguishable from the constructions of the multigenerational Satanist as he appears in this chapter. Enter then, a new breed of anti-cult group, with the denominational anti-British Israel polemics giving way to the true ACM material of J. K.

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<sup>219</sup> British Israelism itself drifted into an anti-Semitic stance during the 1940s as a result of Great Britain's conflict with the Zionist terror groups in Palestine during the mandatory period. Letter from Michael Barkun, 1 July 1992. Today, there are few doctrinal differences between Christian Identity and British Israelism.

Van Baalen, and the emergence of Christian Identity finding its own antithesis in the political and philanthropic ACMS, of which the ADL is the most visible combatant.

Something very similar to the reaction of Christian Identity to the crises of the 1920s and 1930s appears to be at work here. Once again, the 1960s brought unsettling changes in the social fabric of American life. Political ferment, Vietnam, Watergate, and the current international chaos revolving around the collapse of Soviet communism and the painful birth of a putative 'New World Order', coupled with a wave of foreign immigration and an economy in the throes of both a recession and, of greater import, of a profound transition in which whole sectors of traditional 'blue collar' forms of employment may be lost forever have created the conditions in which a considerable number of people are forced to confront their deepest fears. In constructing an objectification of these insecurities, archetypes of evil, deeply ensconced in the collective unconscious of the culture, may be called to the surface.<sup>220</sup> And what more primal image may be summoned than that of the 'ancient enemy'--Satan?

New material is not needed to complete this caricature. For the multigenerational Satanist as he is posited in the texts noted above, and as he is proclaimed by these 'survivors' and 'experts' in the mass media, emerges as the reification of evil formed of the medieval witch in the inquisitional texts, which in turn borrowed heavily from the religious polemics of the first centuries of the Christian era. It was no doubt of ancient vintage even then. Our multigenerational Satanist then, is composed of the 'stuff of dreams', a timeless personification of our own darkest fears. He may perhaps be dressed in a modern business suit, but he remains the Old Enemy however modern his guise.

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<sup>220</sup> The conception of archetypes in the context of the modern construction of Satanism is borrowed from Carl Gustav Jung. C. G. Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, R. F. C. Hull, trans., Bollingen Series XX, (New York: Pantheon, 1959). Cf. Robert Avens, "Image of the Devil in C. G. Jung's Psychology," *Journal of Religion and Health* 16 (July 1977), pp. 196-222.

Enter then the various ACMs to combat this ancient evil. What wonder that then that belief in the efficacy of their mission is so pervasive? Or that the claim of an annual harvest of 60,000 children sacrificed to Satan is found credible in ACM circles? Granted, no viable evidence has yet been produced in support of the multigenerational satanist theory--indeed, to date no satanic survivor story has been able to withstand close scrutiny. Yet the 'satanism scare' has tapped into a current of primal fear, and the ACMs, as has happened so often in the past, have coalesced to combat this ancient fear. It is a timeless battle, and in the self-view of the anti-cult movement, it is a war which gives an unquestioned sense of purpose to the lives of God's watchmen on the wall. And it will be ever so. Until time itself is no more...



## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSION: A CONFEDERACY OF SEEKERS?

*Against stupidity, even the gods battle in vain.* [Friederich Schiller]

*If the Bible is true, then I'm Christ...But so what? Look at 2,000 years ago. What's so great about being Christ? A man nailed to the cross. A man of sorrow acquainted with grief. You know, being Christ ain't nothing.* [David Koresh, 1993]<sup>1</sup>

It is traditional for a dissertation centering on such *esoterica* as millenarianism, small, apparently disparate religious groups, and eccentric views of modern political culture to conclude with a sort of grand, intellectual *apologia* which seeks to make the case that this too is important, if only to a small cadre of like minded scholars. For a scholar to make this case successfully is for that student of the arcane, given the proper circumstances, to cast him or herself into the role of, to borrow one of the central metaphors of this dissertation, an intellectual high priest whose role, in times of crisis, is to step in front of a camera or microphone and on demand hold forth with a well honed sound bite designed to give the public and the powers that be some intimation that someone, somewhere, can explain the inexplicable. Such is the grand conceit of the academy, and such too is the petty conceit of this dissertation.

That in every age, in every era, and in every corner of the globe, there have been groups of people, however small, who have become unalterably convinced that the processes of history are coming to an end is a demonstrable truth. Non-controversial too is the observation that, while these groups of seekers invariably adopt an oppositional stance to the perceived pattern of changes in their respective societies, seldom are these

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<sup>1</sup> "Scores Die as Compound is Set Afire After F.B.I. Move," *New York Times*, 20 April 1993, p. 12.

movements catalyzed from the typical response of selective withdrawal from the dominant culture to an active, violent determination to act on the belief that the Tribulation and its final battles have begun. This dissertation however, has set for itself a more ambitious task than restating the axioms of the field in the context of a selection of little known contemporary movements. Rather, two primary themes are at the heart of this study: when and under what circumstances will an essentially quietist movement evolve from a stance of 'warning and rebuke' to one of violent action, and can the existence of a 'community of seekers' among such disparate, and often bitterly confrontational, belief systems as those which are the subjects of this dissertation be documented? It is to these two questions that this conclusion will be addressed.

### The Question of Millenarian Revolutionary Violence

*How then, shall we begin to think about Jonestown as students of religion, as members of the academy? How might we use the resources available for thinking about human religious activity within the context of the corporate endeavor of the human sciences. A basic strategy...is to remove from Jonestown the aspect of the unique, of its being utterly exotic. We must be able to declare that Jonestown on 18 November 1978 was an instance of something known, something we have seen before...We must reduce Jonestown to the category of the known and the knowable. [Jonathan Z. Smith]<sup>2</sup>*

In the first case study to be considered in these pages, that of Christian Identity, revolution was defined as either a violent resort to arms to overthrow the established state (and not coincidentally, to bring about a denouement to history), or a non-violent, but no less revolutionary, assault on the accepted precepts of a religious tradition. The primary model which formed the backdrop to this study was that of the early fifteenth century Hussite-Taborite-Adamite constellation of religious rebels in Bohemia. There, it will be recalled, a radical offshoot of a non-violent reformist 'revolution' within the Church, faced

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<sup>2</sup> Jonathan Z. Smith, "The Devil in Mr. Jones," in Idem., *Imagining Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), pp. 111-112.

with frustration of its immediate goals and the blatant betrayal of its leader, did resort to a brief spasm of violence, the so-called Prague Defenstration of 30 July 1419,<sup>3</sup> before a substantial number of these rebels withdrew into the fortified cities of Tabor, and, until attacked, anxiously awaited the parousia. Attacked, they fought back with unparalleled skill and, it was noted at the time, suicidal savagery. Eventually, with relative success and breathing space, a sect of radical purists arose from their ranks, the Adamites, who challenged the sect to live as if Christ had indeed returned, as if amidst the splendor of a 'new heaven and a new earth' the original purity of Eden, uncontaminated by the original sin, had been reconstituted. They were annihilated by the forces of Tabor.

With this case as a paradigm, and conditioned by years of the unquestioned expertise of the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith on the subject of the far right wing, it was fully expected that Christian Identity would offer for study a community of millenarian adherents which would fulfill the definition of the term 'revolution' both in its violent activist and non-violent polemical senses. Further, it was decided at the outset that, just as Pius Aeneas, the future Pope Pius II learned of the Taborites--a group as feared and demonized in his day as are the adherents of Identity today--by going to their cities and finding, much to his surprise, a community of believers whose qualities were at least as deserving of commendation as condemnation,<sup>4</sup> so too would this research eschew the received wisdom of the established 'high priesthood' of this most esoteric of deities and attempt to interact with the movement first hand. It was intended that these pages would attempt, however successful the execution, to present the movement in much of the spirit in which Max Weber presented his consideration of that pariah people of his day, the Jews in

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<sup>3</sup> Howard Kaminsky, "The Prague Insurrection of 30 July 1419," *Medievalia et Humanistica* X (1956). For the history complete, see Idem., *A History of the Hussite Revolution*.

<sup>4</sup> Howard Kaminsky, "Pius Aeneas Among the Taborites," *Church History* XXVIII (1959).

*Ancient Judaism*.<sup>5</sup> Thus, readers of this dissertation may be as disappointed as this researcher was surprised to find that for the adherents of Christian Identity, apocalyptic millenarians all, fit the definition of revolution perfectly in its polemical dimension, but only once did an Identity group go beyond words and seek to actualize a revolution in its violent sense. That movement, the Order, was, when it finally came to the attention of federal authorities, rather easily crushed. Worse from an analytical perspective, the Order was led by an Odinist, not an Identity Christian, and almost half of its core membership was comprised of neo-pagan Odinists. Clearly, Identity presents a case of something more complex than the "theology of violence" as the ADL would have it.<sup>6</sup>

In fact, in recent years, Identity adherents have been more the target of violence than its initiator. This was as true for Randy Weaver, held under virtual house arrest on his mountaintop in Idaho for almost a year until federal authorities decided to move in, killing his wife, son, and pet dog in the process, as it was for James Ellison (or King James of the Ozarks in Robert Miles' caustic terms), who found federal agents surrounding his Covenant, Sword and Arm of the Lord compound in Missouri in 1985.<sup>7</sup> Granted, Richard Butler talks a violent game, as did Wesley Swift and William Potter Gale, and as on occasion does Pete Peters. Yet with the sole, ambiguous exception of the Order, this has never catalyzed into actual violence. This despite the social upheavals of the late 1960s and early 1970s, and the tumultuous changes in the world scene in recent years. Theoretically,

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<sup>5</sup> Max Weber, *Ancient Judaism*.

<sup>6</sup> Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, "The 'Identity Churches': A Theology of Hate."

<sup>7</sup> Chris Temple, "A Lesson in Federal Tyranny: The Weaver Family Saga," *Jubilee* 5 (September/October 1992), p. 1. Cf. Idem., "Weaver, Harris Face the Death Penalty," *Jubilee* 5 (November/December 1992), p. 1. On Ellison, see Kevin Flynn and Gary Gerhardt, *The Silent Brotherhood*, pp. 256-261. It is important to note that the charges against Weaver, Ellison, and, as suggested in the quotations opening this chapter, David Koresh, all involved weapons charges--apparently well founded--although these weapons were rarely if ever used. This in stark contrast to the weapons which flood the American inner cities at this writing.

here were conditions which had created revolutionary movements in the past, and social dislocation of the kind ascribed to the origins of millenarian revolutionary groups as posited by Norman Cohn and expanded by Michael Barkun in the context of the contemporary right wing. But still they sleep.

Why then have the adherents of Christian Identity eschewed revolutionary violence, and what, if anything, would catalyze the movement into a confrontational mode? The answer to the former question seems much clearer than the latter. Quite simply, in common with other historical cases of millenarianism, Identity Christians resist the call to violence for the simple reason that, given the soon coming of Jesus, what would a violent, doomed--premature--confrontation with secular authorities accomplish? Hopelessly outgunned and relegated to the distant fringes of society, in the self-view of the movement the guardians of an esoteric truth--the true Israelite identity of the Anglo-Saxon and kindred peoples--they know all too well that they will never be more than a numerically insignificant 'righteous remnant'. Compare this unhappy state of affairs with the widespread popularity and comparative affluence of the Hussite reformers, or of the numerical strength and military power of the Taborite cities! In the corpus of non-Western millenarian movements, such balance of forces considerations meant little to indigenous groups whose time honored customs and way of life appeared on the verge of extinction.<sup>8</sup> Western millenarians however, have historically been more prudent, expecting the imminent parousia, but planting crops for the Spring. When confrontation was on the horizon, these actors took considerable care to cement alliances and timed their actions according to the best available 'rational calculus'.<sup>9</sup> Acutely aware of their numbers, despairing of ever being able to either mobilize support in the dominant culture or of righting the course of a nation "in the hands

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<sup>8</sup> For example, Michael Adas, *Prophets Of Rebellion : Millenarian Protest Movements Against The European Colonial Order*.

<sup>9</sup> Michael J. St. Clair, *Millenarian Movements in Historical Context*.

of an angry God" to use Dan Gayman's terms, what choice do Identity Christians have but to wait. And to watch.

Indeed, watching is what these millenarians do best. They watch for the signs of the End of Days. So sensitive are their antennae in fact, that the very process of enacting the timeless role of 'watchmen on the wall' mitigates against finding either sufficient public support or potential allies in that, as the technology of mass communication improves, the adherents are so bombarded with signs and portents that they are unable to focus on any one subject long enough to generate outside support! Thus, where for a season Randy Weaver's travails were held as apocalyptic, this incident followed the Noahide Laws controversy and the Los Angeles riots, and preceded in short order the Earth Summit in Brazil, the incursion into Somalia, and finally, the horrific end to the federal siege of the Branch Davidian compound in Waco. These latter events have pushed Weaver out of the consciousness of this most volatile of communities.<sup>10</sup>

What, if anything, would catalyze Christian Identity into a violent confrontation with the powers that be? As a movement, it would be hard to envision, short of the return of Jesus or a CNN broadcast from Jerusalem in which the anti-Christ chooses to reveal himself and offer free tattoos to a breathless populace, any circumstances which would bring about such a change. While direct attack on a particular Identity compound or community would be likely to spark a violent response, the movement remains too dispersed, too few, and, if truth be told, too internally diverse for any particular event to be apprehended and interpreted in the same way by the community as a whole.

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<sup>10</sup> These events may be followed in the pages of the premier Identity newspaper, *Jubilee*. See Chris Temple, "A Lesson in Federal Tyranny: The Weaver Family Saga," p. 1; Paul Hall, "Noahide Laws--Religion of a NEW WORLD ORDER," *Jubilee* 4 (November/December 1991), p. 1; Leon Smith, "L.A. Riots: The Second Day of Infamy," *Jubilee* 4 (May/June 1992), p. 1; Paul Hall, "Earth Summit Derision," *Jubilee* 5 (July/August 1992), p. 1; Richard Kelly Hoskins, "Operation Armageddon: America 'Helps' Somalia," *Jubilee* 5 (January/February 1993), p. 1; and Louis Beam, "Showdown in Waco," *Jubilee* 5 (March/April 1993), p. 1.

If Christian Identity is loath to become involved in physical violence, how much less the other millenarians and messianists who people these pages? Certainly, the B'nai Noah show no signs of preparing an armory for Armageddon. Ásatrúers will on occasion threaten violence--to each other--but even with the catalysts of strong drink and a surfeit of edged and projectile weapons, not one of these occasional threats have been carried out. Revolutionary violence in this community is a thought which would not be likely to arise in even the most expansive adherent. Vikings may be a favorite golden age model, but in the real world, rape, pillage--rapine--are all activities best left to Vikings hailing from Hollywood or Minnesota.

Odinists however, present a more interesting case. At the fringes of the movement, there is in Odinism an identifiable sub-culture which, given leadership, arms, and a ray of hope, does offer some potential for genuine revolutionary violence. This fringe appears to be comprised primarily of white prisoners, skinheads, and adherents of the radical right for whom Identity Christians are too old and too conservative, and for whom other racialist ideologies are too secular. It was from this milieu that the Order was created and took wing, and it is thus of some interest to this dissertation to better understand how this belief system is formed and catalyzed from mere discontent into a religious quest, and ultimately, to a revolutionary zeal. Consider then, this letter from a prisoner in Oklahoma. This prisoner, possessed of an extraordinary talent for drawing (employed in the creation of idealized Viking warriors) writes:

...I know about berserkers, I'm kind of a modern day version, a skinhead. I therefore like the image of the warrior-type Vikings. I also know about the gentle, peaceful side of their culture...As you may have guessed, I am a "Nazi," a "Radical," a "Racist," and most of all, a Revolutionary. After all, isn't Asatru a "revolution" of values and thought? I have heard of Odinists being rabidly anti-Nazi--"Oooh, those Nazis gave us a bad name." Well, admittedly Hitler made a lot of mistakes, but all "National Socialism" really was, was a revival of tribal and nationalistic instincts...The Third

Reich produced some of the hardest "beserkers" modern times has seen...[emphasis in original]<sup>11</sup>

The letter is typical of the genre, and suggests some potential for alliance making and the transformation of a nascent movement into a revolutionary force aimed at both a radical reformation of the religious tradition and at the destruction of the political system. However, the very real limits of this force are revealed in a subsequent letter from the same prisoner:

[skinhead actions are] to show that we are not a part of the mainstream sheepish society running around kissing up to the Jews. We are proud of our Race and unafraid to fight to defend it...But that does scare some Racists off. Most of the Klan hates us. They say we are too violent and act like pagan Vandals. That's ok though they are not what they used to be.<sup>12</sup>

In other words, the right wing talks a better revolution than it is prepared to fight. The movement remains bitterly divided, and nowhere is that division more glaring than the isolation of the violent fringe of the Odinist movement from other centers of the 'right wing constellation', or indeed for that matter, from the Ásatrúers. More, should a leader arise who even appears to have the potential to give shape and substance to this movement, it is a safe assumption that he will be neutralized by federal authorities at the first opportunity.<sup>13</sup>

The anti-cult movement, in its various guises, utilizes violence only sporadically--most notably in the kidnapping of 'brainwashed cultists'--and are hardly exponents of

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<sup>11</sup> Undated letter from Oklahoma prisoner. Name withheld.

<sup>12</sup> Undated letter from Oklahoma prisoner. Name withheld.

<sup>13</sup> Such apparently is the fate of Bill Riccio. Riccio, a middle aged skinhead, klansman and neo-Nazi from Alabama, managed to gather perhaps a dozen followers before being incarcerated, again on weapons charges. His unlikely story is featured in the television documentary, "Skinheads, U.S.A.," HBO Television Productions, 1993.



revolution of any sort, be it within the tradition or against the authorities. This leaves the case of Gush Emunim.

Gush Emunim is little short of a revolution within the context of normative Judaism. The stated objective of this movement, to redeem the Land, and in so doing, to redeem the people, is a clarion call for the creation of a new man, a new Jew, abiding by a new Torah on a world utterly transformed from that which know today. More, although idealizing the very existence of the Jewish state, core adherents of Gush Emunim have frequently voiced threats to oppose with force of arms any attempt by that state to alienate the full biblical patrimony of Eretz Israel. Indeed, in Yarnit, Gush adherents fought running hand to hand battles with Israeli Defense Forces rather than surrender the Sinai--despite the questionable status of that desert as a part of the patrimony!

Gush Emunim is in fact a heavily armed force (armed by the state itself, it may be added), living in the midst of a hostile host population, and answering only intermittently to the laws of the Israeli state. They have for many years pursued a course of vigilante violence, while a radical fringe of the movement, the so-called Jewish Underground, actually set out on a crusade which would have culminated in perhaps the most devastating act of millenarian/messianic revolutionary violence in history: the destruction of the al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem to make way for the reconstruction of the Third Jewish Temple! Here was a plan as audacious as it was apocalyptic, and here this recitation of the subjects of this dissertation as centers of revolutionary violence comes full circle.

The Gush are, despite its best efforts, a revolutionary (albeit non-violent) force within their religious tradition. They do not however, in the last analysis, appear to have the potential to form a genuinely violent revolutionary movement, even if the West Bank were abandoned tomorrow. Why this should be, and why the case is no different for Christian Identity or the most radical of the Odinist adherents, is a fitting place to end this meditation. At root, what advantage did the fifteenth century Taborites possess which is

unavailable to the contemporary millenarian/messianic movements? In a word, relative isolation--sacred space.

The Taborites could withdraw from the cities, from Prague, from Brno, and leave behind with the comforts of home and the familiarity of community, the machinery of sovereignty. What the Taborites discovered was that, having renounced their ties to the world, the world was unable to enforce its writ in Tabor. With isolation comes not only consolidation, but radicalization. Millenarian expectations, it seems, if they are to catalyze into revolutionary movements, require isolation in which charismatic leaders may subtly reshape the adherents' perception of the world, of the time, of the very stuff of reality. It is this space, this enclave, which is so sorely lacking among the modern movements. Identity Christians can withdraw to their compounds, if they so desire, but as Randy Weaver and Jim Ellison will attest, they live there on sufferance. The American government is fully capable of projecting its power into the most distant Identity redoubt. The same is true of Gush Emunim. They are well armed and relatively isolated. But the IDF is far better armed, and is capable of dislodging or simply eliminating the most recalcitrant of the Faithful with relative ease!

Indeed, just as Jim Jones fantasized over official suppression, and so transmuted the fantasy into reality, and David Koresh saw the realization of Jones' worst paranoid fears in the apocalypse at Waco, Texas, it appears that in the modern industrialized (or perhaps, post-modern and post-industrialized) world, millenarian revolutionary movements have become relic of a simpler time, a less regulated place.

Is then, violent millenarian revolutionary activism a thing of the past? No, not yet. For the instruments of state control are not yet so developed as to preclude an individual, or a small group of relatively autonomous individuals, from taking action. This is a truth that was not lost on William Pierce or Richard Kelly Hoskins, authors of *Hunter* and *Vigilantes of Christendom* respectively, although neither of these gentlemen would deign

to involve himself personally in anything as perilous as revolution. Others however, may not be so reluctant. Consider:

About myself: I'm in prison for burning an abortion clinic in Norfolk, Virginia in May 1993...I'm a student of Bible Prophecy...I'm also a Vietnam veteran who has fought Communism. Partly because of that I was determined from the start to fit Communism into Bible Prophecy, if at all possible. I looked for evidence that the Antichrist, the Beast, the Man of Sin, Gog (all names for the same man) was a Soviet leader. I found it.

I looked for evidence that the Endtime dictatorship in Western Europe would be due to Soviet conquest of Europe. I found it. I looked for evidence there would be a nuclear war (Soviet attack upon America). I found it, I'm sad to say.<sup>14</sup>

Or:

...millenarianism...influenced my compulsion to defend the cause of the unborn...it led me to exert the use of actual force in defense the little ones' lives. You may or may not be aware that unlike Operation Rescue's participants, whose approach is one of passive resistance, I chose to apply active force.

On 12/30/85 I left my house in Hebron, Kentucky, and drove across the Ohio River to Cincinnati where, using gasoline, I set fire to Planned Parenthood's abortion chamber and a late-term facility about a quarter mile away. Planned parenthood was destroyed, but the late term target was only damaged extensively enough to be shut down for 6 months. Therefore, I decided to use explosives in any future operations.<sup>15</sup>

Like the model of the lone wolf assassin of the Pierce novel, and like many of Hoskins' Christian vigilantes (and unlike the skinheads who hunt in packs and strike only when the victim is assured to be helpless and harmless), these letters from millenarians active on the fringes of the pro-life rescue movement indicate that there remains, in selected instances and among a small group of activists, the obligation to strike back, to take up

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<sup>14</sup> Undated letter from a Prisoner of Christ in Burkeville, Virginia. Name withheld.

<sup>15</sup> Letter from a Prisoner of Christ in Ashland, Kentucky, 10 February 1993. Name withheld.

arms and act on the knowledge that these are the End of Days. Thus, while the instruments of state power may destroy a millennial movement with impunity, against the committed individual, even the powers this world struggle in vain.

### Toward an Interactive Model of a Millenarian Community

*The "reborn" earth is overflowing with the anguished and frantic cries of those who mourn their dead and the screams of those mutilated and dying in religious battle zones from Waco, Texas to New York City's World Trade Center; from northern Ireland to Bosnia-Herzegovina; from the Arab-Israeli conflict in the Middle East to the killing fields and mosques of India. [J. Tim Thompson writing for the dissident Philadelphia Church faction of the Worldwide Church of God]*<sup>16</sup>

*What do I do now?* [Robert Redford in the film, *The Candidate*, after being apprised of his electoral success]

If the question of millenarian revolutionary violence proved on close examination to be something of a chimera, the same can not be said for the existence of a 'millennial community'; that is, a community of adherents of widely differing religious belief systems who, lacking significant access to the dominant culture, talk largely to--and about--each other. The pages of this dissertation looked in exhaustive detail at how this process of exclusion came about, of the rise of a mediating 'priesthood' whose self-appointed task it is to propitiate the distant and exotic 'deities' of the millennial community, and of the web of communication which binds together the disparate sectors of this remarkably large and wondrously diverse confederacy of seekers. It will be enough then, to once again borrow the conceptual apparatus of the religious map in order to locate each of the communities

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<sup>16</sup> J. Tim Thompson, "Worldwide Epidemic: Killing in the Name of God," *The Philadelphia Trumpet* 4 (May 1993).

which appear in these pages in relation to each other and, of greater import, in relation to US as members of the dominant culture.<sup>17</sup>

Before venturing out into the *terra incognita* which has come to be the abode of the subjects of this dissertation, it would be well to consider for a moment the safe ground of *terra firma* upon which these words are being written. Here, safely ensconced in the comfortably secularized heart of the American civil religion, it is easy to rest in the assurance that, if there indeed be monsters out there,<sup>18</sup> we need know nothing of them. This peace of mind is, after all, the primary reason for the existence of the 'anti-cult' movement as it has been posited in these pages,<sup>19</sup> and if the ministrations of this high priesthood should prove inefficacious, well, there is always the police. Or the FBI. Or the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF). Yet the monsters have a disconcerting habit of reappearing. In Jonestown. In Waco. In the great cities and in their suburbs. In the countryside. Seemingly, in recent years they are everywhere, and yet, from the state of our knowledge of them, they would seem to materialize from the very ether itself.<sup>20</sup> Before offering a map by which these exotic forms of belief can be found however, it is important to reiterate that, just as we can view these communities from the comfort of the homogenized American civil religion, they too can peer in from the fringes and they too have a name for our own religious terrain. That name is Judeo-Christianity, and this "syncretic psuedo-religion" as they would have it is, for them, the veritable incarnation of

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<sup>17</sup> As the chapter dealing with Gush Emunim was centered on the attempt to locate the movement on a map spanning messianism and fundamentalism in the Israeli context, this section will deal only with the American movements.

<sup>18</sup> The metaphor, as with so much of this dissertation, is borrowed from Martin Marty, unpub. mss. prepared for *Atlantic Magazine*.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Jeffrey Kaplan, "The Anti-Cult Movement in America: An History of Culture Approach," *Syzygy* 2 (Summer 1993).

<sup>20</sup> For a cook's tour of these apparitions from a secularist's perspective, see John George and Laird Wilcox, *Nazis, Communists, Klansmen, and Others on the Fringe* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus, 1992).

all evil--a last redoubt of the Babylonian darkness which their particular approach to hermeneutics has taught them to fear and despise.<sup>21</sup>

With this relativizing proviso then, the first millenarian community visited in these pages is also in many ways the most distant, spatially and spiritually, from US. It was not always so. In its original form as British-Israelism, this small community could once count among its adherents the elite of nineteenth century British society. It was, in those days, a rather genteel and generally philo-Semitic affair, offering an idiosyncratic biblicism to Great Britain's colonial enterprise. Upon crossing the Atlantic however, the belief system was adopted in the twentieth century in various forms by such disparate leaders as Herbert W. Armstrong and his Worldwide Church of God, the *Dearborn Independent's* W.J. Cameron, Howard Rand, Wesley Swift, and perhaps Gerald L. K. Smith himself. Genteel British Israelism was by World War II transformed into Christian Identity, a virulently racist and anti-Semitic doctrine, and with the decision of the organized Jewish community to strike back, coupled with American security concerns in its conflict with the Axis powers, the process of banishing Identity to the fringes of American culture had begun.

Today, Identity can no longer be found on the map of American religious communities. It in fact resides among the monsters great and small in the wilderness of *terra incognita*. This exile gives every appearance of permanence. Thus, while the identity message is on occasion relayed directly into the American cultural center through suitably packaged radio or satellite television broadcasts, Identity's principle point of contact with the mainstream culture is mediated through the movement's most vociferous foes--the Anti-Defamation League, the Center for Democratic Renewal, and ultimately, the security organs of the state.

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<sup>21</sup> Eustice Mullins, *The Curse of Canaan: A Demonology of History*.

Identity however, does not exist in lonely isolation. Rather, *terra incognita* is peopled with numerous small, and in truth, bitterly divided, theologies and ideologies. Thus, this dissertation borrows from Michael Barkun his concept of the 'white supremacist constellation' to offer an interactive model which included Klan groups, Christian Identity groups, explicitly neo-Nazi groups, Reconstructed Traditions, Single Issue Constituencies and Lone Unguided Missiles, Idiosyncratic Sectarians, and the amorphous Hope Seeking a Means to Fulfillment. The interactions of these movements with each other and with the wider culture were considered in some detail. Yet all of these racist groups remain, as far as the dominant culture is concerned, very much apart, every bit the OTHER with whom we will have no truck, and by whose existence the high priests of the anti-cult movement and the security services justify their budgets--and their existence.

It can not be reiterated too often that Identity Christians are apocalyptic millenarians by definition, and as such, are ever on the alert for signs and portents of the expected Judgement to be visited upon the mainstream culture. Thus, when a dissident sect--however aberrant it may be to Identity sensibilities--appears anywhere on *terra firma*, it is a certainty that its existence will be quickly detected by and interpreted for the movement's adherents. It was therefore little surprise that the early stirrings of the fledgling B'nai Noah community first came to the attention of this research through the pages of Identity journals which distinctly heard on the heels of the Children of Noah, the hoof beats of the apocalypse.

Remarkably, many of the B'nai Noah themselves heard echoes of the same horsemen, albeit with the interpretation that these dread riders were but a vanguard for the long tarrying Jewish Messiah. The connection between the two communities, bitterly oppositional as they are, is in the context of the American religious landscape not as odd a pairing as it would appear on the surface. Core members of both movements trace their origins to a border outpost, Protestant fundamentalism, whose bids for mainstream respectability, most recently under the guise of the New Christian Right, alienated this

group of seekers sufficiently to drive them 'back to the Book'; a hermeneutical quest which resulted in the secession of these individuals from their fundamentalist religious affiliations. Those that adopted Identity soon all but disappeared from the map. The B'nai Noah clung tenaciously to the borderland, but maintained their connection to the 'Judeo-Christian' mainstream through its submission to the Orthodox rabbinate (or at least those members of the rabbinate who would accept them as students). More, they serve as primary links with the constellation of Israeli messianists centered around the Temple Mount movement--the Jerusalem Temple Foundation first and foremost--and the Chief Rabbinate in the person of the Sephardi Chief Rabbi. Clearly, the B'nai Noah reside on the border connecting the American with the Israeli religious heartlands. Further, by virtue of Christian Identity's hostility toward them, the Noahide movement maintains a connection with the white supremacist constellation as well. A remarkable location...

Where the B'nai Noah can be found in a distinctive border zone, the Ásatrú and Odinist communities reside in a remarkable geographic niche of their own. Odinism is, of course, very much a denizen of the *terra incognita* of the white supremacist constellation. Yet it retains a connection, however tenuous, to Ásatrú, and through Ásatrú, to the wider occult and magical community. Ásatrú itself is painfully aware of its connection to the 'dragons which dwell beyond the pale'--Odinists and neo-Nazis and klansmen, and, for that matter, Identity Christians. Ásatrúers as individuals however, reside (albeit often covertly) in the mainstream culture as lawyers, as military officers, and as college professors, to name but a few of the diverse pursuits of this community. Yet at heart, Ásatrú is a magical religion, and it is to the community of wiccans and neo-pagans that they most often turn for solace--and marriage partners. Indeed, Ásatrú inhabits the most perilous of border regions; warding at once the gateway to the *terra incognita* of the racist right, and ironically, providing a well travelled bridge between the white supremacist constellation and the magical/occult community.



Finally, while each movement covered in this dissertation has found its own unique location in the universe of American religiosity, and while each has its own web of interactions both with like-minded and oppositional religious communities, the most intimate relationship which each movement 'enjoys' is arguably that which binds the movement to its anti-cult 'priesthood'. In the final analysis, it is the anti-cult movement which forms the key connection between the movement and the dominant culture. The ACM watchdogs are truly the 'watchmen on the wall', keeping their vigil over the borders of *terra firma*. They at once monitor the doings of the distant 'monsters' beyond the horizon, and, of greatest import, it is their reports which, through their unchallenged access to the mass media, create and disseminate the public image of the target group to the dominant culture. To US.

With the 'anti-cult' image of the millennial community suggested by this dissertation, this work has come full circle to the point where it began. It was with the ADL's manichaeian construction of Christian Identity that this research started. When upon closer examination this most terrifying of the denizens of the unmapped regions of *terra incognita* proved to be considerably less threatening than their public image suggested, the need for this work to for the first time throw light on the darkest corners of the community of seekers became clear. It is hoped that in this respect at least, this dissertation has achieved some measure of success.

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